# Deoband Ulema's *Movement for the* Freedom of India

Farhat Tabassum



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# FOREWORD

Recent advancement in the field of science and technology has brought about radical changes in the field of history and historiography. Of late subultern studies and microscopic historical analysis of the issues and events that were left out at the periphery are brought out to the centre. The object is to underscore discourses and contribution of marginality. The present book is an excellent example of such case that aims an understanding the complex role played by ulemas in the freedom struggle. Muslims as we all know, constitute the largest minority of the country and ulemas are known for their noticeable contribution in the socio-cultural, political, historical and religio-philosophical spheres of the country. The contribution made by the ulemas, however, have either been relegated to the negligible margins in the pages of history or are ruthlessly ignored. Deoband ulemas and their work have been victims of crass political negligence. The present study gives and evidence of being attuned to the recent trends in the field of history, historiography and other allied branches of learning. It takes a curious and fair critical stance to estimate the making of the ulemas selected for the dissertation, evaluate their intellectual statuture and their firm commitment to the

the values of national integrity and communal harmony. Their unwavering commitment, purity and sincerity of their intention and wide range of their scholarship had an enthralling effect and influences on masses. Their selfless and disinterested leadership infused a spirit of nationalism and promoted a sense of togetherness amongst the masses. Their writing and speeches acquainted the indigenous people of the foreign infiltration, usurpation and exploitation. People learn to resist and retaliate.

The study highlight the role of ulemas in Indian politics between 1857 and 1947 with strong support of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan, Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi, Maulana Qasim Nanawtavi. The study microscopically takes into account the multidimensional personality of the ulemas, their distinguishing political contribution in terms of their slogan or movement like "Khaksar movement" of Maulana Inayatullah Mashriqi and their proximity to the Gandhian philosophy and also interms of his support to the Indian National Congress and "Reshmi Rumal Movement" etc. The author's pains taking efforts leave no corner of their achievement unillucidated and bring in to assessment the chief contribution of the ulemas that were schematically ignored by the dominant stream of the intellectuals and historians motivated by their ulterior motives. She has very systematically followed interdisciplinary methodology so that a credible dimension is attributed to her study. As an awaken scholar, pretty sensitive to the recent emergence in the different discipline, she has made the best of her efforts to highlight the nationalist discourses of the Deoband Ulemas in general and the selected ulemas in particular. Their marginality is centralized in this study. The study also makes certain revealing remarks regarding the orthodoxy or religious centeredness of the endeavors of those ulemas and authenticated her statements by supporting ... to the establish thinker, politician and historians

ulemas the book convincingly and authentically presents deserves a word of appreciation and cause for a serious attention.

This kind of fair and unbiased approach, I am sure, would open a fresh avenues to approach the sincere involvement of the marginal communities and their contribution to the nation that were deliberately side-tracked or denigrate by the dominant intellectual statuture of the Indian society. After all, we all owe indebtedness to our precursors irrespective of their religion, caste or creed, for their devotion, dedication and selfless sacrifices.

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# AUTHORS NOTE

In India, or for that matter in any part of the world, ulema have always been criticized for one or the other reason. Sometimes they are accused of hurling the gullible followers into the dark alleys of outdated customs and traditions. Sometimes they are blamed for preaching bigotry and extremism. They are even accused of preaching hatred and violence at the drop of a hat. But if one peeps into their lives and their mission, one can easily find that they are actually torch bearers of peace and communal harmony and all the charges against them are uncalled for. Ulema always strived for unity and peaceful co-existence. It is only the mistrust among various communities that creates all the troubles and needs to be corrected. Through this book, I have tried to bring the lives and works of some of the renowned ulemas alive before the readers, so that the misunderstanding about them could be removed and their less known role in the country's freedom struggle is brought to limelight.

I would like to take this opportunity to express deep gratitude to Dr. Mirza Mohd Khizar, my teacher, Maulana Asad Madani, President, Jamiat Ulema-i- Hind; Maulana Mehmood Asad Madani, General Secretary, Jamiat Ulema-i-

Hussain Education Society & President, Jamiat-Ulema, Nanded, my father Mr. M.N. Siddiqui, Mr. Tilawat Ali, President Rahber Education Society, M/s. Manak Publications Pvt. Ltd. for their valuable assistance in this task. I am extremely grateful to Dr. M. Ishaq Jamkhanawala, President, Anjuman-I-Islam and Former Minister, Maharashtra State for writing 'Foreword' to this book. I would also like to thank Mr. Sufyan Siddiqui, my husband without his help I could not have completed the job. Finally I am also indebted to numerous friends and colleagues who have assisted me in this work.

I owe special thanks to Barbara Daly Metcalf, Douglas Ian Henderson, Farooqui Zia Ul Hasan and Gufran Ahmed for the rare photographs I have reproduced from their sources.

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# 1

# INTRODUCTION

One of the important aspects of the history of Indian Nationalist Movement is the role played by the Ulema (scholars) in the liberation of the country. However, it is unfortunate that their role has rarely been appreciated. Consequently, a number of Ulema who made significant contribution towards freedom movement have remained in obscurity. Moreover, there has been a trend to brand Muslims as separatists and natural supporters of the Muslim League in toto. The general distrust of the entire Muslim community before and even after the Partition has largely resulted in the segregation of the Muslims from the mainstream. It may be mentioned here that Muslims have been living in India for the past 1000 years. It would be wrong to say that they do not have any love or attachment for the country of their birth or that they choose to stay aloof from the mainstream politics because they do not believe in the possibility of co-existence with people not following their faith. It is true that the political activities of the Muslim League gave the impression that Muslims did not retain any trust in the governance of the majority community. The League popularised the idea that in the

distortion of religion. Islam does not encourage separatist notion; rather, it preaches religious harmony and restrains its followers from degrading other religions. Besides, it enjoins upon its faithfuls to render selfless service for their motherland, no matter which land they belong to. But the League's philosophy was not derived from original Islamic sources. On the contrary, the League was a conglomerate of power-hungry politicians with Jinnah acting more like an advocate for a small section of elite Muslims, rather than a responsible leader of the entire community.[2]

It is interesting to note that even during the period when the League was making forays into the Muslim society, several responsible Muslim leaders, including the Ulema, alerted the people to the dangerous designs of the League. Reference can be made to the role of Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani, who went the whole hog to castigate the League for its divisive programmes. Madani made it clear umpteen times in his addresses, how and why it was important for the Muslims to fight against Britishers along with their Hindu brothren for the independence of the country. He discouraged Muslims against falling prey to the communal agenda of the League, which he believed, would bring untold harm to the entire community.[3]

Mention may also be made to the role of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan and his student, Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi, both of whom devoted their lives for the cause of freedom of the nation. Starting his career as a teacher at Deoband, Mehmood-ul-Hasan evolved into an inspiring revolutionary. He sent his student, Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi, to Kabul to coordinate the revolutionary activities there against the British.[4] He himself went to Saudi Arabia with the same purpose but his mission did not fructify there due to the reasons, discussed in detail separately. Sindhi's approach to revolutionary activities was systematic and

didn't approve of Gandhi's approach[5] that seemed to him founded on myths and superstitions. Sindhi upheld the principle of giving political recognition to all communities. Thus, he thought, it was necessary to bring about unity of action.

The Ulema not only participated in the freedom movement, but also led it from the front and made numerous sacrifices for the motherland. Before going into details, it would be worthwhile to understand the meaning and position of ulema within Islam.

The word Ulema is a plural of Alim (scholar) and refers to those who are well versed in the knowledge of Qur'an—the words of Allah and Hadeeth—the record of sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad.

The Ulema thus have a great importance in the Muslim community. They are called the heirs of the Prophet. Their role and importance is established by the historic statement by none other than the Prophet himself. While addressing the august congregation on the occasion Hajjat-ul-Vida (the Prophet's last Haj), the Prophet asked whether he hadn't conveyed the Qur'an in toto as it was revealed by Allah. Everyone replied in affirmative. Then, while urging all those present to stand a witness to the fact, he further said since no prophet would be born to guide the mankind thenceforth, the Qur'an and Hadeeths be conveyed to those who were absent and unaware of them.

Thus, all those present on the occasion started the mission of spreading Islam right from the moment the Prophet exhorted them to do so. Actually, these people and those believers who had seen the Prophet even once in their lifetime form the respected group of Sahabas (companions of the Prophet). And those who had seen Sahabas is the second group known as Tabeyeen, followed by Tabe-Tabeyeen and finally comes the turn of Ulema. Each of the above groups has importance in that order.

on the work and ultimately the responsibility fell on the shoulders of the Ulema. In other words, the Ulema became the last heirs of the Prophet.

As the Qur'an is expounded in Arabic language and contains the commandments of the Creator in the most concise form, common man cannot comprehend them easily. One needs to have a thorough knowledge of Arabic language, Hadeeth, Islamic jurisprudence and Islamic history to interpret and explain its verses accurately. Sometimes, even the most learned and the Ulema commit mistakes in this respect. Different interpretations of a single word 'Qaum' by Allama Iqbal and Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madni can be cited as an instance in this context.

Iqbal inferred the meaning of the word 'Qaum' as a nationality based on one religion. According to him a nationality founded upon race, language or territory is unacceptable and causes great misfortune and trouble. He considered that territorial nationality is against the concept of Islam.[6]

On the contrary, Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani proved that the word 'Qaum' denotes, among other things, any group of men and women bound together in the pursuit of a common purpose, which may not necessarily be religion. He gave examples of the common nationalities of the prophets and their unbelieving people e.g., Prophet and the Quraish to prove his point. He also gave another example in support of his contention that the Prophet once united the Jewish tribes of Madina with his Muslim followers by a solemn covenant to fight against the pagan Arabs, who were preparing to attack Madina. The terms of the agreement were that each party would be free to follow its own religion, but in all other matters, the Muslims and the Jews would be regarded as one community.

Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani also rejected Maulana

definite views on the formation of the free and undivided India. They can be enumerated as follows:

1. The Indian State shall be a republic and its President shall be chosen by election. He will exercise the supreme executive authority.[8]
2. In the Central Government, the Muslims will be in a minority, but their religious, political and economic rights will be protected. The Centre will deal with a limited number of subjects, namely defence, foreign affairs, communications, transport and finance. The remaining subjects will be provincial. The provincial governments will deal with the religious affairs.[9]
3. Education will be a provincial subject.[10]
4. Muslim canonical law (Shariat) or Muslim criminal law will not be enforced.[11]
5. The organisation of government will be on the basis of partnership of various communities.

The above example of Iqbal and Maududi proves beyond doubt that there is a possibility of wrong interpretation of Qur'anic verses. It also proves how important the role of 'Ulema' is in the interpretation of Qur'an. As mentioned earlier, the 'ulema' are the last heirs of the Prophet entrusted with the responsibility of guiding the people right from the cradle to the grave. A slightest error can spell disaster. As such, no one can deny the necessity of good Ulema as well as religious schools (madrasas).

However, it will be a travesty of truth if we don't recall Allama Iqbal's views on the Partition. He unequivocally said that his views on nationality didn't mean that they were in support of the country's division.

After the creation of Pakistan, Iqbal was hailed as its mentor because in his presidential address to the League in 1930[12] he had advocated the formation of a consolidated Muslim north-west state. But, this according to Iqbal was to

> "Muslims will get majority rights in five out of eleven Indian provinces with full residuary powers and one-third share of seats in the total in the house of the Federal Assembly."
>
> Again in his letter to *'The Times,'* London, dated October 12, 1931,[14] Iqbal refuted the charge made by the British journalist, Edward Thompson, that he was endangering the defence of the country by asking for the division of India. Iqbal explained: "I am all for a redistribution of India into provinces with effective majorities of one community or another on lines as advocated both by the Nehru and Simon Reports."[15]

According to Islam, a true Muslim can and should never be disloyal to his country. It is quite another issue that a few Muslim leaders and the Ulema, basing their standpoint on the misinterpretation of the Qur'an, came up with a two-nation theory and managed to mislead the gullible masses. According to them, believers cannot co-exist with non-believers to form a united society or state. Apart from such proponents of separatism, the British policy of divide and rule played a decisive role in the partition of the country. Besides, the political leadership was also responsible for the Himalayan blunder of dividing the country.

Partition remains an agonising episode in the political and social life of India. But after independence, it is the sacred duty of every Indian to forget the past and look forward to the future. It will be a travesty of the truth, if the credit of freedom is attributed to a particular class or a community. All Indians, irrespective of caste, creed or religion participated in the country's freedom struggle. The National Movement was a collective effort.

Reverting to the subject, the ulema's contribution in the freedom struggle is commendable as seen from several angles. The list of the Ulema who participated in the nationalist struggle, is indeed very long. However, names of the six Ulema are outstanding and deserve special mention here because of their exemplary contribution to the freedom movement. They include: Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi, Shaikh-ul-Hind Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan, Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi, Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, and Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar.

In addition to this, a study of the brief history of Dar-ul Uloom, Deoband, which was established to impart teachings of Islam, is indispensable for a proper understanding of how madrasas moulded the outlook of the Ulema on national issues.

The Deoband School basically aimed at preserving the Islamic values from the corrupting influence of the West, particularly British.[16] Its anti-British stand was obvious in many respects; its support to the Indian National Congress is one such example. In fact, Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi founded the Deoband School to counter the British design on isolating Muslims after the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. The Muslim society, which was in tatters following the British crackdown after the Mutiny, needed leadership to tide over its social and political crises. Maulana Qasim thought that an institution like the Deoband School could fulfill the social and political aspirations of the community and the best way to do so would be to revert to Islam and castigate the British. It may be pointed out that the Deoband School remained antithetical to the ideas of Sir Sayyed Ahmed Khan and consequently to the Aligarh School. One of the reasons for this was Sir Sayyed's proximity to the British and his predilection to western scientific education.[17]

While it is true that the anti-British bend of Deobandis significantly contributed to creating Muslim revolutionaries like Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hassan, Maulana Sindhi and others, the Deoband School itself was far from revolutionary as such. Its nationalism was more of a negativist response than a positivist programme of action. It supported the Indian National Congress at a time when the Congress itself was hardly anti-British.[18] It could not reconcile itself to the modernism of Sir Sayyed because it chose to brand Sir Sayyed as a stooge of the British without caring to assess the relevance of Sir Sayyed's thought. Most importantly, it did not hit out at the so-called evils of the western civilisation beyond criticizing the political role of British in India. It was, in fact, Mahmud-ul-Hasan who infused a political and intellectual content to the religious ideal of the Deoband School.

Nevertheless, the Deoband School produced the revolutionary Ulema. However, if this school could understand the issue of reconciling Islam with national aspirations from the beginning, which Mehmood-ul-Hasan attempted at a later stage, its role in the freedom struggle would have had wider ramifications.

Apart from the Muslim revolutionaries belonging to the Deoband School, allusion may also be made to the contribution of the other Muslim revolutionaries. A prominent name in this regard is of Inayatullah Khan Mashriqui, who initiated a movement called the Khaksar Movement late in 1931.[19] Based on the ideals of Nazism and Fascism, Khaksar School attempted to free the Muslim youth from the shackles of frustration, dissolution, and aimlessness. Interestingly, the movement was not confined to the Muslims alone, but open to the followers of all religions. The overwhelming response that this short-lived movement received could also be ascribed to the efforts of leaders like Syed Raza Ali, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed, Aga Gazanfar Ali Shah, Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, Maulvi Sayyed Murtuza Khan, Khan Bahadur and Maulana Zafar Ali Khan.[20]

The Khaksar School disapproved of a Gandhian solution to politics. The school didn't advocate violence as a first option, but did not refrain from advocating its use either when other options failed. The ideals of Khaksar School were secular and practical, which was why perhaps its philosophy did not find favour with orthodox section of Muslims. Inayatullah Khan was subsequently dubbed as materialistic and even an atheist. Some Ulema also issued fatwas against him and as a result, the movement died a natural death. Nevertheless, Khaksar movement has left an indelible impression on the history of modern India. At one time, it had as many as 15,000,00 (Fifteen Lacs)[21] motivated members from various communities ready to take on the might of the British.

... revolutionaries were Ali brothers—

Guru, Maulana Mohammed Ali wanted to provide a strong base to the nationalist movement. From Tilak he learnt the importance of mass contact. His unswerving faith in the leadership of Gandhi was solely due to latter's ability to mobilise the masses on an unprecedented scale. For this reason, among others, he became closer to Gandhiji in the Non-Cooperation Movement.

Mohammed Ali launched the Khilafat Movement, which had both social as well as political implications. Socially, it aimed at bringing together the Ulema and the Western educated Muslim youth. Mohammed Ali thought that this would strengthen Islam and promote Indian Independence as well. Politically, it aimed at attacking British rule especially the British's divisive policies in Turkey, which was a seat of Islamic Khalifa.[22]

Mohammed Ali forwarded an argument that any foreign interference in Turkey amounted to interference in the religious affairs of Muslims since Turkey was the representative of the highest power of Islam. He wanted to maintain the Khilafat of Turkey as the effective religious organisation. He made efforts through the Khilafat Movement to mobilise Muslims against the British in India. He succeeded to a significant extent. Simultaneously, he understood that no anti-British movement could succeed in India without Hindu-Muslim unity, and he handed over the reins of the Khilafat Movement into the hands of Gandhiji. It was perhaps the most important step in the direction of unity of people and action.

The Khilafat Movement, however, received a rude shock following Gandhiji's decision to call off the Non-Cooperation Movement. It also marked the end of the golden period of Hindu-Muslim unity, paving the way for the rise of communal parties on the political horizon. It also marked the widening of chasm between Mohammed Ali and the Congress. Mohammed Ali blamed Gandhiji for making a mess of people's trust. However, the Khilafat Movement was one of the greatest achievements of the Muslim leadership, which forged the unity

and content, having little to do with Turkey, is proved by the fact that when Mustafa Kamal Pasha chose to abolish Khilafat as such, there was hardly any protest from those who had made it into such a sensitive issue against the British in India.[23]

Mohammed Ali stood for the complete freedom for all communities. He even had differences with Gandhiji on this issue because he felt that at times "Gandhi behaved as though he was fighting for the freedom of the only majority community, making the 70 million Muslims dependent on the Hindu Mahasabha."

It is usually believed that Mohammed Ali turned a communalist after the end of the Khilafat Movement. This is, however, not true. According to Dr. Moin Shakir,[24] nationalism in India is not and has never been a concept with a definite meaning, which was accepted by all the leaders of all the communities. Mohammed Ali thought of nationalism as means to achieve independence of the country, which simultaneously guaranteed freedom for all communities from the fear of domination.

## NOTES

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2

# ULEMA'S REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS OF THE 18TH, 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

## (1) FARAIZI MOVEMENT

After the martyrdom of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan while resisting the British attack, the Muslim intellectuals felt the need for a people's movement to fight the aggressors and regain their independence. Thus, exactly after three years of Tipu Sultan's martyrdom, a movement came into existence,[1] which intended not only to fight for independence, but also reform the society. It was launched by Maulana Shariatullah Bengali (1781-1840) in Bengal and became popular as *Faraizi Tahreek* (fundamental duties movement).[2]

As it was a two-pronged movement, efforts were made to reform the society by laying stress on faith in one Allah, obedience to the Prophet Muhammad, cleanliness and honesty.

It strove to break the age-old tradition of saint-disciple and introduce in its place the concept of teacher-student. The ... of following the saints, holding of Urs and Muharram

conformity with Islamic teachings" and drew attention of the people to their fundamental duties.

The Movement declared a war against untouchability and discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, and colour as they are against the tenets of the Qur'an.[3] There was a great level unity and equality among the members of this Movement. And hence it kept on consolidating its base among the backward and downtrodden people because of its principles of equality.

Apart from the reformation work, the Movement infused the spirit of *jihaad* against the foreign rulers. Shariatullah once declared that it was an obligation on the part of all Muslims to wage a war against the aggressors. With the announcement of this decree on war, more people, especially farmers and labourers, joined the Movement. Though a war could not be waged during the lifetime of Shariatullah, his son Hafez Muhammad Mohsin (1819-1862)[4] completed his father's unfinished task and further strengthened the Movement.

After the death of his father in the year 1840,[5] Mohsin, who was affectionately known as Daudu Miyan, gave a new slogan of Al-Arzallah (which means Allah's earth). He declared that it is Allah's earth and nobody can rule it by virtue of a legacy. The British rulers had no right to collect *lagaan* (tax) from farmers and therefore exhorted the people to resist the government and landlords collecting the unjust tax. Though this announcement about lagaan won many friends and supporters for the Movement, it also turned many pro-British Hindu landlords hostile.

Daudu Miyan was implicated in false cases time and again. He was charged with house thefts in 1838, murder in 1841[6] and was also arrested for holding a public meeting without permission in 1844. Again in 1846, he was arrested on the charges of kidnapping and murder. But each time, he was released and declared innocent.[7]

Contrary to the government's expectations, all those

conspiracy between the rulers and Hindu landlords succeeded in curbing the Movement.

Though Shariatullah's Movement was limited to East Bengal, a similar movement was launched during the same period in West Bengal by Nisar Ali alias Titoo Mir.[9] Its aims and objectives were similar to that of the Movement in East Bengal. As such, these two movements were known as Faraizi Tahreek only. And needless to say, despite many sacrifices this Movement too met with a similar fate due to the conspiracies that were hatched by the Hindu landlords and the rulers. Both the Hindu landlords and the rulers left no stone unturned to crush the Movement. They let loose a reign of oppression on the supporters of the Movement. And as if this was not enough, they started interfering in religious matters and even used to collect taxes from Muslims for keeping beards (a religious option).[10]

When the Muslims of Sarfrazpur condemned the collection of taxes for keeping beards and refused to pay the same, Kishan Roy Purwa along with an armed group of people entered the village and torched a mosque there.

On the one hand the Muslims were worried over the growing incidents of violence by the landlords and discrimination by the British Government on the other. They were thus caught between the devil and the deep blue sea. Under such circumstances, the Muslims decided to rise up against the government, which was extending all possible help to Hindus against the Muslims and their movement. Muslims could not achieve success as the government and landlords who were hand in glove tried all possible means to crush it.

Though all these Muslim movements could not succeed on the political front, one has to admit that they were successful in reforming the Muslim society to a great extent.

Maulana Ghulam Rasool Maher in his book Sarguzshit Mujahideen writes: "Whatever opinion one might have in this

## (2) REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT OF MAULANA QASIM NANAWTAWI

Nanawtawi and Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband, are so interrelated that the study of one could well be the study of the other. Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi was born in the year 1833[11] in Nanawtaw village of Saharanpur district, in Uttar Pradesh.[12] His father was Asad Ali. As there was a tradition of two names then, Maulana was also known as Quraish Hussain.[13]

Though Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband, was established because of the efforts of Nanawtawi, his most important contribution lay in his efforts towards purging the Muslim society of the social ills it was beset by.

Nanawtawi firmly believed in principles of Islam and Shariah. He held that a solution of all the problems could be found in the Shariah. The most urgent problem before him was to reform the Indian society. In those days, exploitation of women was on the rise. Though the ancient Indian history shows that women had been exploited since later Vedic period, crime against the fair sex was on the peak in his days. Inhumane treatment used to be meted out to women, especially to widows. A widow was considered to be a cause of all miseries and problems, in home or society.

Nanawtawi took up the cudgels against the evil by advocating remarriage of widows. He was a reformist with a perfect vision. He said without implementing the law of *Shariah*, reformation of society was not possible.

Nanawtawi's movement coincided with the growing rigidity of the Indian society, dominated by outmoded traditions, inverted thinking, and superstitions. He, however, waged a battle against such evils without losing hope and confidence.

Nanawtawi's concern about the plight of widows might be because of his own widow sister, who was later married off to Abdul Hai of Phallat.[14] His sister's marriage gave a new

and increasingly began to accept the concept of the remarriage of widows. Nanawtawi's mission proved to be a great success and his message reached all and sundry.

Without economic independence, there is no meaning in discussing the social freedom of women. Nanawtawi exhorted people to do justice to women by implementing the principle of *Shariah,* which grants *Tarka* to daughters.

Needless to say, the Muslims of India knew this but shied away from putting it into practice. It was a challenge before Nanawtawi to convince people about its necessity. The Jalalabad episode[15] proved to be a landmark event in this direction.

In Jalalabad, (a town in Muzzafar Nagar district), women were deprived of the right of Tarka. Nanawtawi issued a *fatwa* restricting people from purchasing immovable property in this town, as it violated the principle of Shariah. Especially, Rohilkhand, Muzzafar Nagar and Saharanpur[16] were the places where Nanawtawi's movement evoked an overwhelming response. Widows of these places were subsequently given their rightful share in property.[17]

## Nanawtawi and Revolutionary Activities

Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi faced constant opposition from his family in his revolutionary activities. However, he had the support of his mother and whatever success he had achieved, he ascribed it to his mother.

Differences cropped up among some Ulema on the issue of battle against the British. Maulana Shaikh Mohammad Sahab[18] was of the opinion that the battle with the Britishers would be suicidal in such circumstances, as he was fully aware of the strength of the enemy and incompetence of the Indian military. However, Maulana Haji Imdadullah and Nanawtawi[19] decided in favour of the battle against foreign rulers. Maulana Hafez Zamin also deserves a mention here, as he was a strong

Qazi,[21] whereas Maulana Mohammed Munir and Maulana Mohammed Hafeez Zamir Ahmed[22] were given charge of the two battalions. Maulana Shaikh Mohammed was doubtful of the strength of Indian military, because it was nothing in comparison with the advanced British army.[23]

*Nanawtawi*, with the assistance of Nawab Shabbir Ali, was successful in getting the support of the ruler of Delhi, Bahadurshah Zafar.[24] With his intervention, the battle secured a national character. No doubt, the fearless personality of Nanawtawi played an important role, but the leadership of Bahadurshah Zafar did give it the much-needed strength and confidence.

It was planned that the battle would begin from Thana Bhavan and end with the liberation of Delhi from the British clutches.

**Thana Bhavan**

The first phase of the battle started from Thana Bhavan with an attack on the British soldiers, who were passing along the Bagh-e-Sher Ali Road.[25] A British soldier was killed and Indians managed to seize some weapons, including a cannon.

*Nanawtawi* made extensive preparations for the attack. Maulana Ahsan Manazir Gilani in his 'Sawan-e-Qasimi' writes that though it is not clear whether Nanawtawi had actually participated in this attack or not, it goes without saying that he was the main force behind it, and must have actually participated in it.[26]

Both 'Naqsh-e-Hayat'[27] and 'Sawan-e-Qasimi'[28] don't mention the name of Nanawtawi, but it appears unlikely that he could have kept himself away from this attack, which later became known as 'Attack from the road of Bagh-e-Sher Ali'.

**Attack from Bagh-e-Sher Ali**

The attack from Bagh-e-Sher Ali was a successful attempt of the revolutionaries against the British. When the news of

weapons from the British. A plan was worked out to attack British troops passing along the Bagh-e-Sher Ali road. The garden along the road proved very helpful as a place of hiding for the revolutionaries. Haji Imdadullah led a battalion of some 30-40 revolutionaries.[30] All of them hid themselves in the garden and when the British soldiers were passing through the road, they pounced on them. It was an unexpected attack for the British troops. One British soldier was killed in the attack. The attack was very successful from the point of the Indian revolutionaries as they managed to seize some weapons and a powerful cannon.[31]

The attack proves the bravery and valour of the revolutionaries. They didn't have sufficient weapons and yet they got what they had aimed for. This Bagh-e-Sher Ali attack was to prove a prelude to the Battle of Shamli.

**Battle of Shamli**

After the Bagh-e-Sher Ali incident, it was natural that the British troops would not take things lying down. The following statement throws more light on their retaliation strategy.

"The news (riot of Bagh-e-Sher Ali) has reached Muzzafar Nagar. The collector orders the military to counter-attack Thana Bhavan."[32] The above statement of collector implies that the incident of Bagh-e-Sher Ali was the first event of the battle of Shamli.[33] As the British Government had most advanced and powerful artillery, it had decided to take revenge on the revolting Indians. And as part of their retaliation plan, they surrounded Thana Bhavan. This news spread like a wild fire in the Indian camp. Besides, reports came in that British had attacked Shamli. After hearing this, the revolutionaries in tens of thousands rushed towards Shamli.

In 'Sawan-e-Qasimi,' Maulana Syed Manazir Ehsan Geelani

(small fort), where the British troops were camping. A fierce battle ensued.[35]

It must be mentioned here that Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi,[36] Maulana Imam Rabbani,[37] Maulana Rashid Ahmed[38] and Maulana Hafeez[39] played a prominent role in the battle of Shamli.

Thus, it proves that the general perception about the Ulema having concern only about religious matters and nothing else doesn't hold water. The persons mentioned above were religious scholars, yet they took an active part in the political movements against the foreign rulers from time to time. Here, Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi deserves especial mention. It was Nanawtawi who first gave a call for war against the foreign rulers, despite lack of arms and ammunition. It further proves that for Nanawtawi, the end was more important than the means available.

The small fort of Shamli had no fencing wall and the British forces were firing unabatedly from all sides. Thus, the revolutionaries had a little chance of leading a decisive attack on the British forces. In such a difficult situation, Nanawtawi led his group from the front. He proved himself not only as a brave person, but also an intelligent soldier. He thought of a plan about attacking a canopy at the entrance of the fort. Taking advantage of the closed entrance and sparse firing, Nanawtawi climbed up the canopy and set it ablaze, creating an access to the fort.

The revolutionaries entered the fort and valiantly fought the British troops inside. Until then the revolutionaries were unable to involve the British army in a combat fight because of the obvious reasons. But once the combat started, the purchased British soldiers could not stand before the determined revolutionaries, and finally they were defeated and Shamli was conquered.

But the martyrdom of Haji Zamin Ahmed[40] in this battle left a big void. The revolutionaries lost one of their best and

While recalling Hazrat Maulana Zamin's sacrifice, Maulana Mehmood Hasan says,

> "It seems as if all the events combined just for the martyrdom of Hazrat Maulana Zamin."[41]

Later, with the fall of Shamli and Thana Bhavan, the Muslim revolutionaries lost their zeal and confidence.

The British forces launched a manhunt for the revolutionaries. Warrants were issued. Haji Imdadullah, Qasim Nanawtawi and Rashid Ahmed Gangohi were their main targets. The government announced prizes over their heads. It left no stone unturned to nab them, but its efforts did not fructify.

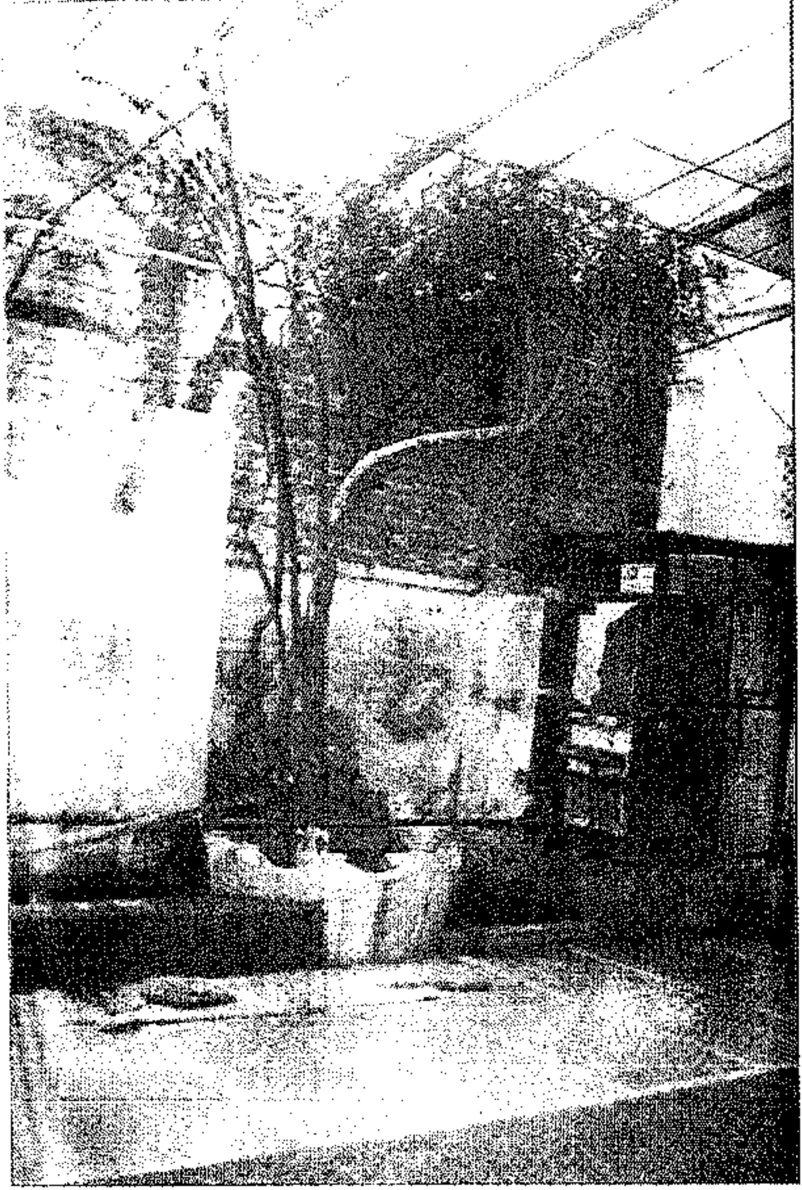
The miraculous escape of Haji Imdadullah from the house of the landlord of Punjab, Abdullah Khan,[42] needs to be mentioned here. Haji Imdadullah had taken shelter there. Somehow the British police came to know about this. They surrounded the house. Haji Imdadullah hid himself in a stable in the house. The policemen searched the whole house, including the stable, however, Haji Imdadullah, managed to escape.

In a contrast, Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi was a strict follower of the Qur'an and hadeeths. He remained in the hiding only for three days[43] and later kept moving to Deoband, his native Nanawtaw, Amalti, Rampur etc.[44] British forces failed to track him.[45]

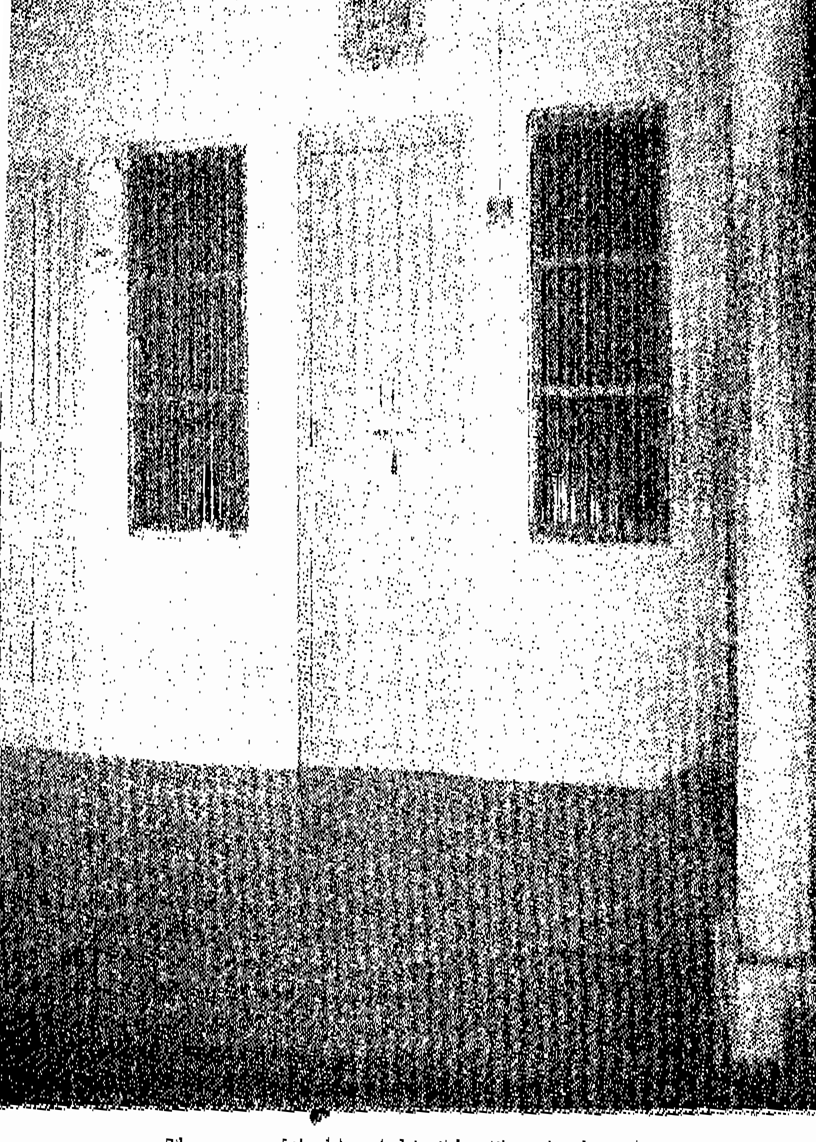
## (3) KHILAFAT MOVEMENT

Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar was born in the year 1878.[46] As in the case of many great leaders, he too was orphaned at a tender age. Since childhood Jauhar used to hate the Britishers.

After completing higher studies from the Oxford University,[47] he returned to India. He applied for a job in



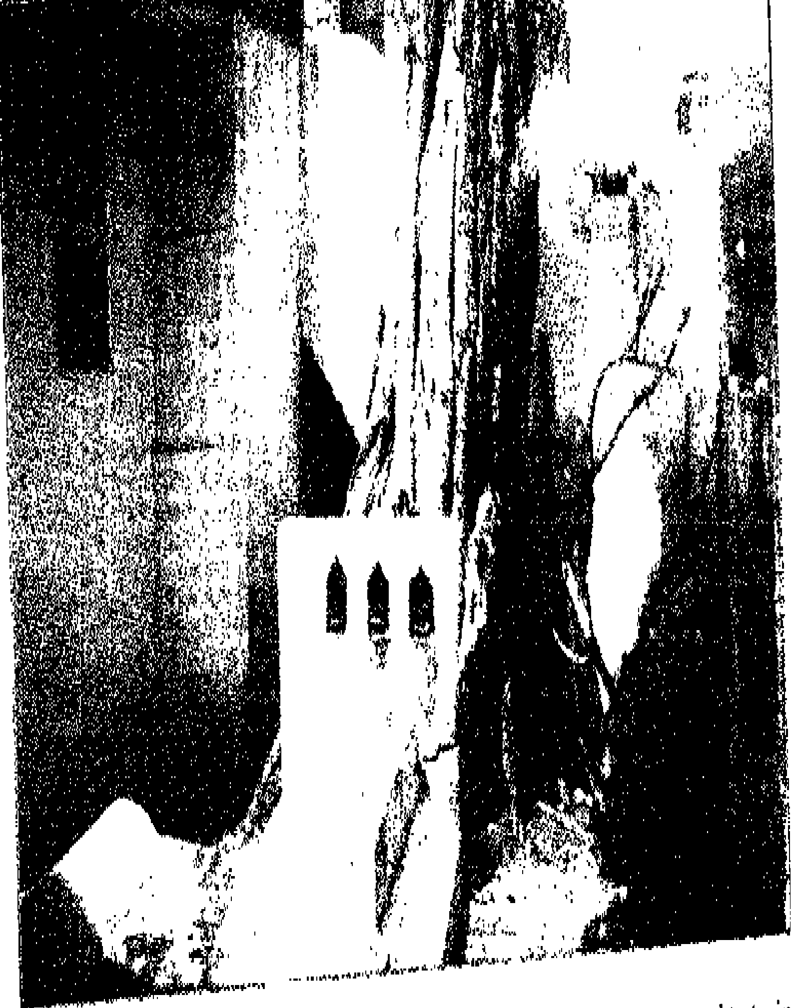
The small pomegranate tree in the historic Masjid-e-Chattah under whose



The rooms of the historic Masjid-e-Chattah where the Maulana Mohammed Qasim Nanawtawi used to hold meeting.

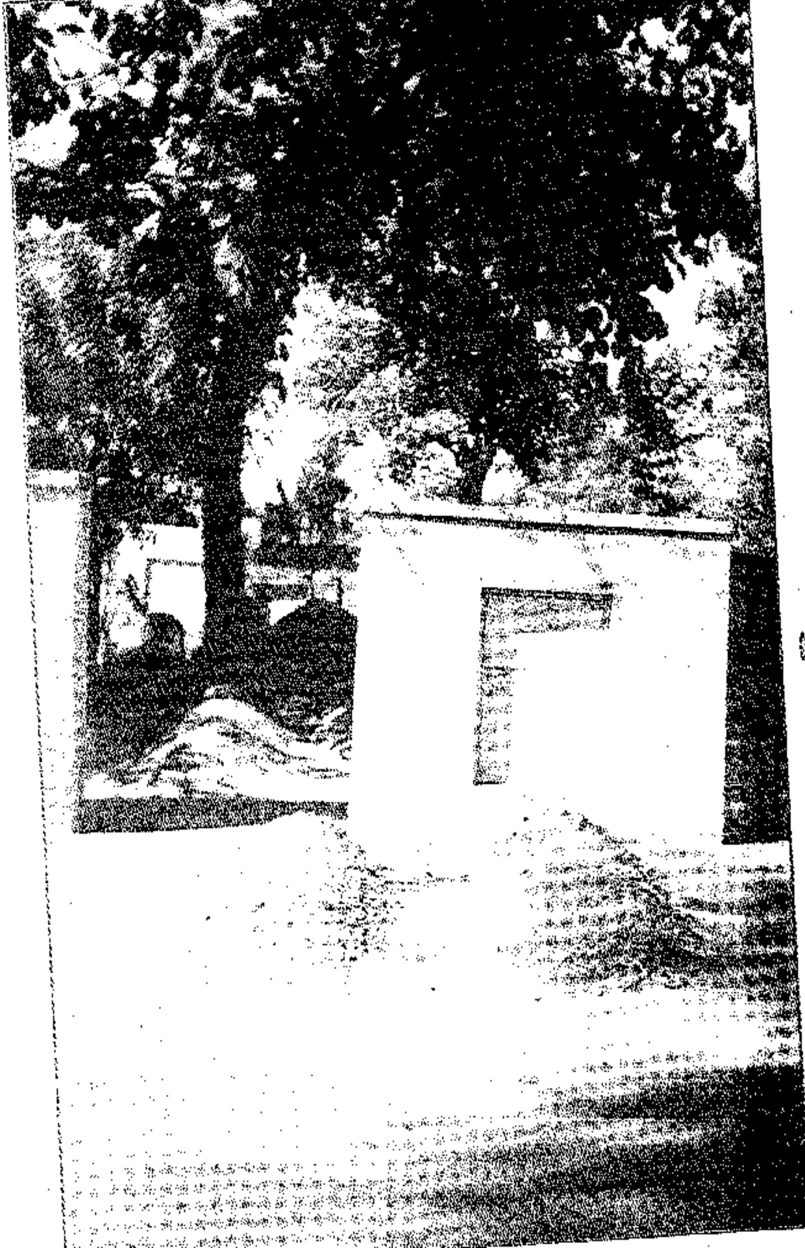


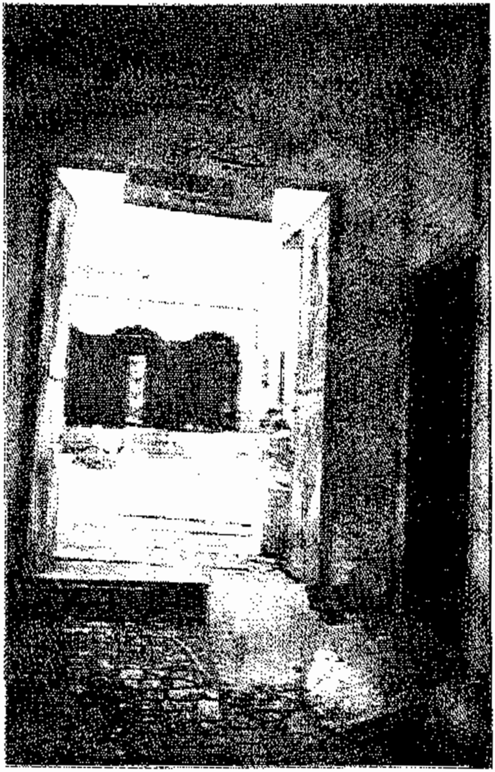
A front view of new building of Darul-Uloom, Deoband, in Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh.



In addition to imparting eduction to youths, the founders of Darul-Uloom used to train them in arms. The house, where arms and ammunitions were used to be stored secretly, is seen partially, behind the graves.

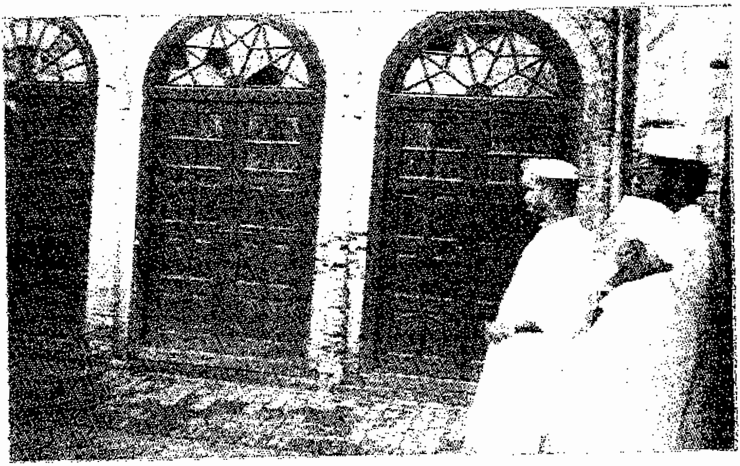


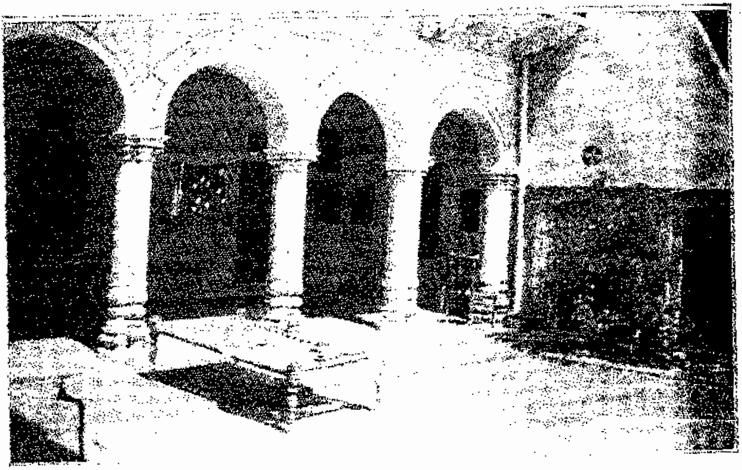




An old house with a very narrow and long approach from the main road, where secret meetings were used to be held and (bottom) an interior view of the house.







The house of Maulana Mehmood-Ul-Hasan, where secret meetings used to be conducted. The house has an underground portion, where arms training to be imparted to the students and (bottom) opposite portion of the same house.



Maulana Mohammed Ali Jauhar, who spreaded the Khilafat Movement in India and was one of the great freedom fighters and proponents of Hindu-Muslim unity.

*Courtesy*: Gurfan Ahmed M.A., *Freedom Struggle & the Muslims*, Faizaan Book Supplier, Delhi, 25th November, 1996

was deprived of a job, obviously because of his hatred against the Britishers.

From the above episode, it is clear that the British rulers were aware of the revolutionary thoughts of Jauhar and thus tried to keep him away from the educational institution. Jauhar's most important revolutionary step was publication of the *Comrade*, on January 15, 1911.[48] The journal proved a very vital medium for moulding public opinion, especially that of Muslims, who remained aloof from politics till then.

Jauhar was deeply disturbed by the Partition of Bengal. This was one of the main reasons behind the launching of the Comrade.[49] However, the journal was soon banned, because of its support to the cause of Turkey. Jauhar in one of his articles in the Comrade had given a detailed account of the wrongs done to Turkey by the Britishers, following which Jauhar and his brother, Shaukat Ali, were sent behind the bars.

Jauhar was released after two years of imprisonment. It was the time when Mahatma Gandhi had emerged on the scene. Gandhi realised that there was a need for Hindu-Muslim unity to advocate the cause of Khilafat Movement, of which Jauhar was the main leader. Khilafat was with the Sultan of Turkey, who was recognised the religious head of the Muslim community.

The World War-I had a crippling affect on the Khalifat Movement and by the year 1919, the Ottoman Empire was in tatters. This in return shattered the aspirations of the Khilafat Committee of India.

Later, a joint session of Congress and Muslim League was held in Delhi in 1918.[50] Dr Ansari was the chairman of the League Reception Committee, while Hakim Ajmal Khan was the chairman of Congress Reception Committee. They strongly condemned the Sharif Hussain of Madina, who had rebelled against Turkey.

In contrast, the Khilafat Movement was very active in India [illegible] of Abdul Bari of Frangi Mahel and the ulema.

movement got the much-needed momentum. This was possible because of the Khilafat Movement that had brought all Muslims and Hindus together. And when Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan issued a 'fatwa' (decree) on July 19, 1920,[52] seconded by as many as 484 Ulema, the Hindu-Muslim unity got further strengthened.

In the beginning of the World War I, the Britishers said that the Turkey was taking part in the war on its own will and even in case of defeat, there would be no threat to the government of her Sultan. But the following statement of the Viceroy after the war was quite contrary.

"Turkey," the viceroy said to a delegation from India, "cannot expect any more than any other power which drew the sword for Germany wholly to escape the consequences of her action".[53] This statement of the Viceroy shattered the hopes of the delegation.

Another conference of the Khilafat Committee was held in Calcutta on February 20, 1920.[54] It was presided over by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. A historic decision of sending a delegation to London was passed. Again the Khilafat Committee also passed a non-cooperation resolution. A delegation had reached London which was received by Fisher on March 2, 1920.[55] The delegation consisted of Mohammed Ali, Syed Suleman Nadvi, and Maulana Hayat. Mohammed Ali had played a pivotal role in this delegation, who opened the case on the invitation of Fisher.[56] Mohammed Ali said: "Then I would say this. The question has also been raised in more than one quarter that Hindus in India have got nothing on the earth to do with the Khilafat question, and the fact that they are making common cause with the Mohammedans in itself argues that this is a political movement rather than a religious question. As to that, I would say that if you were aware of recent facts in Indian national life, you would at once see that this is not the case. During the last few months, certainly during the last year, there has been a very

come to regard the Khilafat issue as a national rather than a sectarian question. They have taken this view chiefly on account of Gandhi."[57]

The above statement of Mohammed Ali makes it clear that the problem was not related with a particular community. The participation of Hindus makes it clear that the Khilafat Movement was for a national cause. But all the attempts of Mohammed Ali were in vain and he came back with empty hands.

The Khilafat Committee then met in Allahabad on June 9, 1920 and decided to launch a non-cooperation movement. It came out with a resolution urging people to:

1. Give up titles and honorary posts,[58]
2. Resign from posts of Civil Services,[59]
3. Resign from services in Police and Army,[60] and
4. Not to pay taxes.[61]

The Khilafat Movement further got the support of Gandhi, who declared, "I am bound as an Indian to share sufferings and trials of fellow Indians. If I deem the Mohammedan to be my brother, it is my duty to help him in this hour of trial, to the best of my ability, if his cause commends itself to me as just."[62]

The Muslims' confidence was building up due to Gandhi's wholehearted support for the Khilafat Movement and his free and frank opinions on all other important national matters.

The Khilafat Conference in Allahabad presented a unique example of the Hindu-Muslim unity, when Gandhi exhorted the non-Muslims to help the Muslims and fight jointly to end the British tyranny.

Mohammad Ali, after passing the non-cooperation resolution, asked Aligarh University to give up government ... could not follow his call because it

national university, which later took the shape of Jamiat-e-Islamiya.

Mohammad Ali's efforts also helped form a group of enthusiastic students who took part in the non-co-operation movement. Mohammad Ali, who was an ardent follower of the Khilafat Movement, was jailed[64] along with Hussain Ahmed Madani, for issuing a fatwa, declaring an act of the British Government as a 'haram.' Mohammad Ali, who led the Khilafat Movement and put a new life in the Indian National Movement as well, infused the much-needed confidence among the Indians at a time when they were completely under the grip of the cultural impact of the West.

The Khilafat Movement was proving to be a bridge between the Hindus and Muslims. However, the movement and Mohammad Ali received a great setback, when Turkey itself discarded the Khilafat issue on March 2, 1922.[65]

The end of Khilafat in Turkey, however, did not deter Mohammed Ali from continuing his movement of Pan-Islamism in the country. He kept his struggle alive through his writings in the "Comrade" and public speeches. He was anxiously concerned about the future of India, which, he held, lay in democracy. His theory of "cultural federalism" was rooted in the idea of unity in diversity, religious philosophy of oneness of God, tolerance, brotherhood, and fraternity. Mohammed Ali was confident about the possibility of establishing a cultural federation in India in which people of all faiths could live in harmony. He believed that such an arrangement though had not evolved, would still be one of the best "grander, nobler and infinitely more spiritual than the United States of America".

Pan-Islamism of Mohammed Ali sometimes led his critics into dubbing him as a communalist. However, this is not true. On the contrary, it is true that following the failure of Khilafat Committee and flare-up in the communal situation across the country, Mohammed Ali parted ways with the Congress and also with Gandhi whom he held in high esteem. But this did

operation averment made several people doubt the ability of the Congress to lead the struggle. Most of the Congressmen themselves were unhappy with the decision of Gandhi to call off the agitation, especially at a time when the movement seemed to be having a positive effect. Hence, Mohammed Ali's drift from the Congress at that juncture was not altogether surprising.

Mohammed Ali made a sincere attempt to bridge the gulf between the Hindus and Muslims so that a united India could be built. Despite his deep religious orientation and Pan-Islamism, he remained an active proponent of communal harmony, which he believed, was within the range of practical possibility. However, this never came about. He succeeded in driving home, particularly amongst the educated Muslim youth, the importance of mass mobilisation. Mohammed Ali was a man who taught the Muslim community the significance of public opinion in building a united nation; ironically, political leaders mainly from and Mohammad Ali Muslim League took this lesson, meant for the solidarity of India, to win the battle for Pakistan.. In this, as in several other things, Mohammed Ali represents "the pathos of a great but fallen race."

## (4) KHAKSAR MOVEMENT

Khaksar is a Persian word, which means humbleness and selflessness. Thus, the name of the movement itself shows that it was started with the sole aim of selflessly helping people to regain their glorious days.

Inayatullah Khan Mashraqi founded the movement in 1931.[66] There is no denying the fact that in those days the condition of Muslims was very pathetic. They had lost their state, domination and dignity. They were haunted by feelings of inferior complex and became an easy prey for their enemies. ... intended to end the notion of inferior

at Achra (now in Lahore, Pakistan). He obtained his Masters degree from the Punjab University and later spent about five years at the Cambridge University, England,[68] and gained thorough knowledge in different faculties and learned the Eastern languages like Arabic and Persian. He became a member of the International Congress of Orientalists.[69]

Back to India, from 1918 to 1920[70] Mashraqi worked as an Assistant Secretary in the Department of Education. In 1924, he published the famous book titled 'Tazkera,' juxtaposing modern science and technology with the Qur'an.[71] This book was contradictory to all the earlier translations of the holy book. Therefore, Islamic scholars of both the Sunni and Shia schools of thought vehemently opposed this book.[72]

'Tazkera' lays stress on gaining domination and power. It exhorts Muslims to bring about a revolution like the materialistic Europeans did. For this very reason, the young generation appreciated this book, despite opposition from the orthodox Islamic scholars.

Mashraqi kept the example of Germany's Fascism before him for resurrecting Islam. He selected Khaki uniform,[73] a symbol of brotherhood to be engraved on right shoulder and Belcha, a spade-like tool, for the activists of the movement, who would be selfless and honest servants of human beings and would use might and power for their upliftment.

Prominent among those who were associated with the movement included Sir Syed Raza Ali, Dr Sir Ziauddin Ahmed, Agha Ghazanfar Ali Shah, Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, Maulvi Murtuza Khan, Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazal-e-Haq Peerach and Maulana Zafar Ali Khan.[74]

The movement was not only limited to the Muslims, but also to the Jews, Christians, Brahmo Samaj people and all those who believed in the existence of the Almighty and religion could also become its members. The hallmarks of the movement were discipline, military training, and hard work. Its activists were evangelists of unity among human beings.

was not against taking arms for defense, as a last resort. Though Mashraqi died on August 27, 1963,[76] his followers can be found in some parts of India and Pakistan even today.

## Basic Principles

1. Complete faith in the Almighty, who may be a Param Aatma, God or Allah, according to people of different faiths. This belief in the Almighty is the basic principle of the movement. Every member of the movement believes that the Almighty keeps an eye on his/her activities. One day, he has to die and will have to give an account of his deeds before the Almighty. Hence, he loves and praises the Almighty and fears Him.[77]
2. Obedience to the Prophet, who may be Krishna, Buddha, Musa, Issa or Muhammad according to one's belief. Obedience in word alone is not enough, one should show his obedience follow in both words and deeds, one's Prophet.[78]
3. The third principle is its members should be loyal and faithful to their leaders, without any preconditions.[79]

## Duties

1. A Khaksar has to follow his own religion honestly and should not bear a grudge about other religions.[80]
2. He should always wear Khaki uniform that will promote unity and brotherhood.[81]
3. He should always carry Belcha.[82]
4. He should always wear a badge of brotherhood on right shoulder. It intends to show that he is a pioneer of brotherhood.[83]
5. A Khaksar should participate in a parade and physical exercises with his local leader everyday for at least 15 minutes. This will always keep him alert and help in doing public service.[84]

a Khaksar should contribute his due in

**Laws**

1. Every Khaksar should make as many friends as he can.[86]
2. He must always be hospitable and humble and try his level best to win more friends.[87]
3. He should avoid indulging in discussions related to religion or politics.[88]
4. He should avoid contradictions and confrontations.[89]
5. He should not hate or misbehave with anybody.[90]
6. A Khaksar is not permitted to waste his time and money.[91]
7. He should develop and expose his hidden talents.[92]
8. He should be faithful, punctual and honest.[93]
9. A Khaksar should salute in a military manner.[94]
10. A Khaksar should do business with his colleagues at minimum profit.[95]
11. He should not be talkative, but silent and alert.[96]
12. He should always be ready to obey.[97]
13. No Khaksar should be affected or disheartered by weaknesses and drawbacks of colleagues.[98]
14. He should not expect any returns from public for his services.[99]
15. A Khaksar should not accept any favour from anybody and should not buy anything from his colleagues, superiors or anybody without paying money.[100]

The movement aims to secure the loyalty and obedience of its members without placing preconditions and equates the status of its founder to that of a prophet. It regards the Qur'anic order about obedience of the Prophet as equivalent to obedience of its leader.

In one of his addresses, Mashraqi said, "Obedience to the Prophet means nothing but following his oral, timely, emergent, diplomatic and personal orders like followers of any other leader do. Yes, the age of prophets had gone by and no prophet will arrive now. The Law of the Almighty was completed in

purpose of formation of any organisation or party is not other than providing a living leader whose words must be obeyed with the same vigour like that of the Prophet.

He further stated: "Thus, in other words, a leader of Muslims is one who is alive, speaks and is immune to criticism and opposition from his followers. He is attached to Allah and the Prophet. Only Allah and the Prophet may tackle him. The leader may hold discussions, but as "La Yushrik Fi Hukumehi Ahada" (Allah is one and His order is final) his words are also final and binding. He is supreme and alone. He follows Allah, Sharia of Rasool and Sunnah as per his discretion and not on the advise of his followers."

Mashraqi trained and taught youths in such a manner that they know that Islam is for maintaining dominance as, he believed, and which all the rules and orders of Islam intend to.

Mashraqi asserted: "Where the victory flag flutters, one group gets superiority over another, one side is hapless and the other is powerful, there, in a reality, live prophets. The first and last rule of the Almighty equates faith with victory and a non-believer is synonymous with downfall and defeat."[101]

"Islam wants to remain in dominance and for this very reason the Almighty had sent the Prophet. Apart from this, there is no other reason given in the Qur'an about the Prophet's arrival," maintained Mashraqi.

He further explained the reason in the following words: "The single aim of the Prophet Muhammad was to gain dominance on the earth and lead the Arabs to the pinnacle of success. This was the only reason behind the Prophet's birth."

The Khaksar Movement had laid greater stress on the need for spirit, sacrifice and military training. Youths were prepared to lav down lives for the dominance of Islam. By joining the

common sight everywhere. A sense of self-respect and courage had developed.

Despite all this the movement died a natural death. After independence Mashraqi announced winding up of the movement. In 1948, he founded a new party in Pakistan called the Islam League[102] for furtherance of political objectives and spent his remaining life in its promotion.

The main reasons attributed to the failure of the movement were the 'materialistic' thoughts of Mashraqi, who enumerated them in his various addresses and books and on the basis of which Islamic scholars issued a fatwa (decree) against him. However, it is a fact that the movement prompted Muslim youths to make their world on their own.[103]

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89. *Ibid.*
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91. *Ibid.*
92. *Ibid.*
93. *Ibid.*
94. *Ibid.*
95. *Ibid.*
96. *Ibid.*
97. *Ibid.*
98. *Ibid.*
99. *Ibid.*
100. *Ibid.*
101. *Ibid.*, p. 194.
102. *Ibid.*
103. *Ibid.*

# DAR-UL-ULOOM, DEOBAND
## A Revolutionary Organisation

The establishment of Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband in 1867[1] was a reflection of the uncertain social, political, religious and economic situation that prevailed in the post-Mutiny period. The school focussed not only on addressing the problem of education and building the character, but also on giving equal importance to the state and society. It is now considered next to the world-renowned Azhar Islamic University, Cairo in Egypt.

Muslim intellectuals and theologists had been feeling the need for a revolutionary institution since the unsuccessful Mutiny of 1857, in order to liberate the country from the foreign yoke and secure political independence through peaceful means. Thus, needless to say, its ulema (scholars) had a lion's share in the country's freedom struggle.

Before going into details of the history of Dar-ul-Uloom, a brief account of the causes that led to its formation would be worth mentioning.

### British Economic and Political Policies

After the Mutiny, the Muslims were shattered both economically and politically. Prior to the invasion of British,

wrote: "From the period of Hazrat Adam till date, from East to West and North to South, there is no other country other than India, which not only imports gold, silver and other costly goods from other countries and in return exports herbs, mud and different plants."

The renowned traveler of the 14th century AD, Ibne Batuta writes: "Tughlaq did not allow money to be taken out of India, however if a person wanted to take the money out of the country, he had to face a lot of difficulties. As such, the money remained in the country and it became very rich and prosperous."[3]

After the establishment of the East India Company, the situation had totally changed. The British East India Company was established in India in 1608 during the reign of Jahangir, the Moghul ruler. Mr. Hawkins was the first British Ambassador, who got the permission for establishing a factory at Surat, even in the face of strong opposition by the Portuguese.[4]

By impressing the Moghul ruler, Sir Thomson succeeded in further gaining permission to found factories at Agra, Gujarat, Ahmedabad, Burhanpur, Ajmer etc.[5] The British navy was the most powerful force. Britain indeed ruled the waves. They had the best warships and the most powerful battleships. Gradually, all these things proved dangerous not only to the other European powers, but also to the Moghuls and even Indians.

The British navy was so strong that even Moghul force had to take its permission.[6] The Arabs and Moghuls had to gradually accept its superiority. However, the powerful British navy later indulged in robbery, looting, plundering innocent people and this was the beginning of British tyranny. Even the Nizamshahi and Marathas failed to defend themselves. As such, one can easily conclude that from the very beginning, the British were not simply traders, but had political and imperialist designs. After the death of Aurangazeb in 1707, the Britishers started direct interference in the administration. They gained control over many rich provinces following the Battle of Plassey and finally the Battle

of Buxar proved the last nail in the coffin of the Moghul Empire.[7]

According to Lord Macauly, after securing victory in the Battle of Plassey, the East India Company and its employees were flooded with money. An amount of Rs 80 lakhs was sent to Calcutta from Murshidabad through waterway. More than 100 boats with flags fluttering and soundings drumbeats entered Calcutta. Some month's back Calcutta was like a desert, but now it looked livelier than ever before. Trade flourished and every British citizen became wealthy.

Then the Britishers started manipulating the country not from a commercial point of view, but from a political angle. A letter by one of the *nawabs* to the East India Company shows how the company had started manipulating the resources of the country. The company stopped payments to employees and began to send the money to their country.

The Battle of Plassey proved to be a milestone in the establishment of the power of the East India Company. Its hegemony increased and up to the 19th century it became an unquestionable power. The process of increasing wealth had started by the victory in the Battle of Buxar in 1765.[8] It gave legal recognition to the transfer of power by the grant of *Dewani* of the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the East India Company.

Thus, it becomes clear that the Battle of Plassey was the beginning of the golden era of the Britishers. And with this began the large-scale exploitation of Indians. The Britishers stopped paying to Indian traders in return for goods. This was even admitted to by Lord Clive. The East India Company enjoyed more influence in trade and politics during the period of Lord Clive, followed by Lord Warren Hastings.

**British Education Policy**

The second main reason behind the formation of Dar-ul-Uloom was, of course, the British education policy, which was mainly concerned about their business and industry. According to Justice Mahmood[9], the policy was neither intended to bridge

the gap between Hindus and Muslims nor to develop a friendly attitude towards the Britishers. Apart from business, their education policy aimed at spreading Christianity through various British colleges and other institutions.

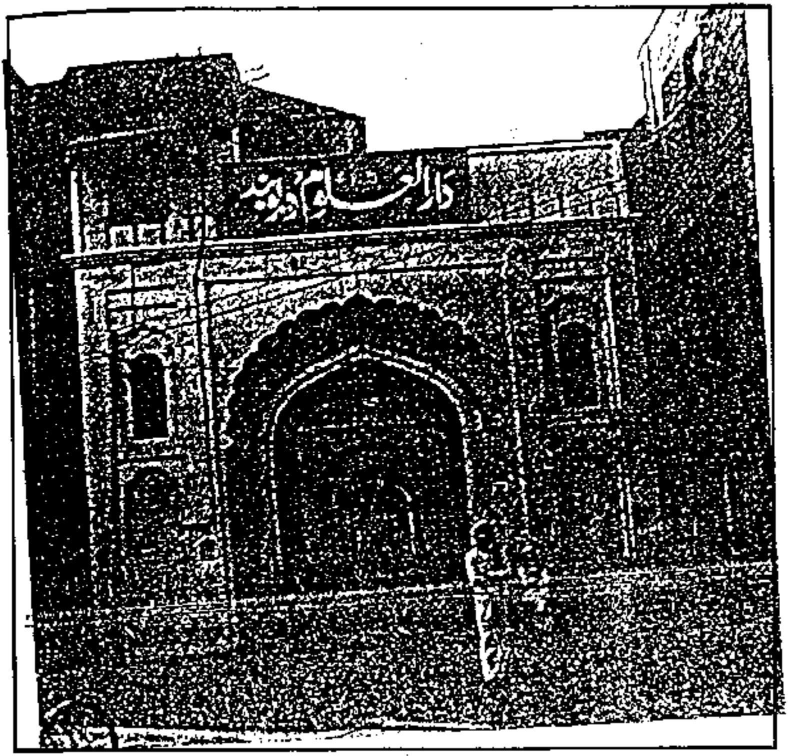
The faulty education policy and Partisan attitude had angered Muslims. They were denied higher posts despite a high rate of success in the Civil Service Examination. It can be inferred from the statement of British officer, Sir Auctin Callel's,[10] statements that the aim of British Government after the Revolt of 1857 was nothing but to take a revenge. And as part of this dubious plan, it abolished the posts of Qazi.

Besides, the education policy shut its doors on the Muslims. The Britishers even annexed Islamic School of Hughli and turned it into an English college. As if this was not enough, they stopped recruitment in colleges. The Commissioner of Sunderban had stated in a government gazette [11] that,

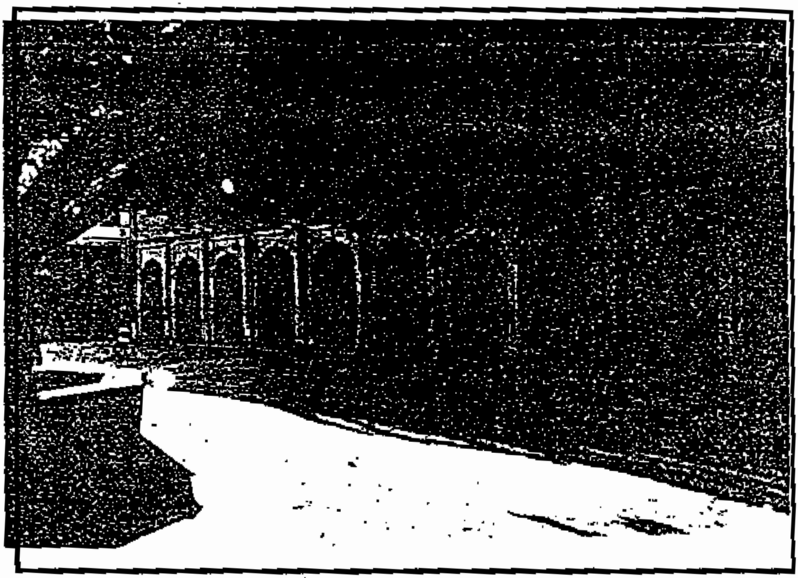
> "only Hindu candidates should be recruited to the vacant posts in Sunderban and no Muslims should be appointed. If Hindus do not come forward, let the posts remain vacant."

Rajaram in his report to the Committee of House of Commons on the judicial system in India stated that he had found Muslim lawyers sincere and honest, whereas Hindu lawyers in general were not well spoken of and they didn't enjoy much confidence in public. This goes on to show the sincerity on part of Muslims and that even after loss of power, Muslims had retained a degree of confidence.

The aim of educational system of Britishers was to divert Muslims from their Shariat and impose British culture. Though the government adopted a revengeful attitude towards Muslims after the Mutiny, it realized the need of imparting modern education to them in order to remove their feelings of hatred and anger. It started giving grants to schools, but at the same time it wanted to restrict religious education.

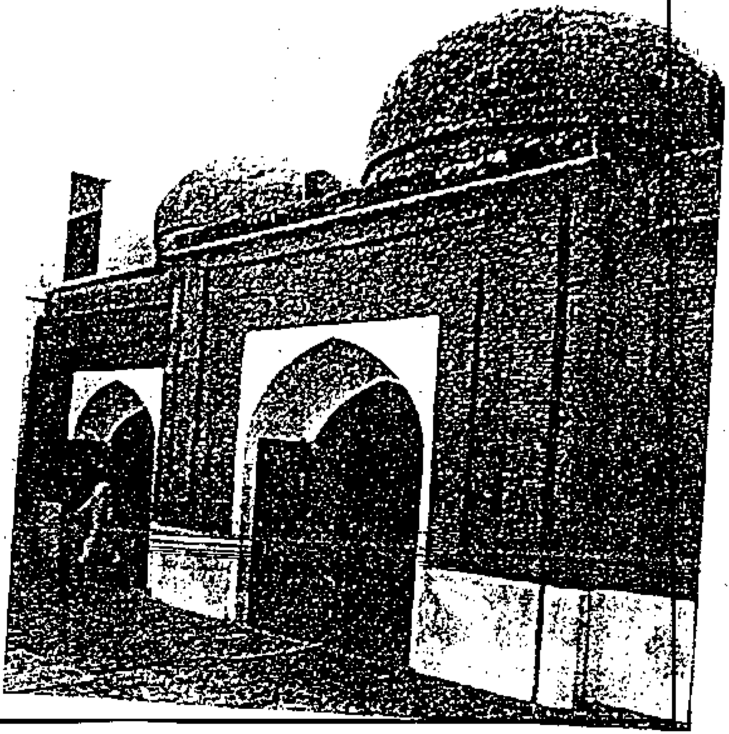



The main gate of the Darul-Uloom, Deoband.



first classroom building at Darul-Uloom.

*Madrasah* at Deoband



An inside view of the gate "Bab-e-Qasim", named after Maulana Mohammed Qasim Nanawtawi.

*Courtesy* Metcalf Barbara Daly *Islamic Revival in British India:*

All the above reasons compelled Muslim intellectuals to introspect and create their own institutions, which could fulfill their social, political and religious aspirations. One such school came into being, in the form of Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband.

**Establishment of Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband**

In such an unfavorable situation as discussed earlier, Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi took up the cudgels against the rulers and laid the foundation of Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband in 1867. His idea was to counter the two-pronged problem that the community was facing; the ignorance of Muslims and the onslaught of Christianity.

Thus, proverbially by establishing Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband, Nanawtawi managed to kill two birds with one stone. Depriving Muslims of education was not so much of a problem as depriving them of employment was. Sir Villain Hunter's[13] statement to a newspaper in Calcutta on 14th July, 1869 substantiates the point. He said posts might remain vacant, but no Muslim should be appointed.

All said, Muslims who were rulers of India for centuries, thus became the ruled and after the Mutiny, they were almost reduced to beggary, thanks to the revengeful attitude of the British Government. In such a situation, the need for an institution like Dar-ul-Uloom was natural.

**Location of Deoband**

Deoband is situated 22 miles south of Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh, and about 90 miles from Delhi towards east-north.[14] The place has importance right from the time of Prophet Syed Suleman.[15]

The prominent families of Deoband were Siddiqui, Shaikh and Osmanis.[16] The Muslims were in majority in Deoband and left their influence in various fields, including architecture, which is reflected in the grand mosque of Deoband. There was a tradition of marriages among themselves, which ensured them a strong base and kept their conservative thoughts intact.[17]

There are two other historical mosques, namely Masjid-e-

Chatta, where the great Sufi Hazrat Farid Baba Ganj-e-Shakar was said to have meditated[18] and Masjid-e-Khanqua, which was built by Aurangzeb.[19]

During Moghul period, Deobandis used to get very respectable positions, but with the decline of Moghuls they began to face many difficulties. In the beginning of 18th century, they fell victim to the exploitation of the Rohellas and Sikhs.[20]

Later, Deoband became an eyesore for the British because many Deobandis played a vital role in the Mutiny. A large number of ulema from Deoband gained control of the Shamli, a town of Muzzafar Nagar. But soon the British Government recaptured it, sent about 34 men to gallows and imprisoned scores of others. The revenge was not yet over. Three neighbouring villages were burnt to ashes and properties of many rich families were confiscated.

**Why was Deoband Selected?**

The revolutionary work of Shah Waliullah[21] was carried on after him by his son and other pupils. Shah Abdul Aziz[22] was the eldest son of Shah Waliullah. Maulana Abdul Hai, Mufti Sadruddin, Maulana Mamluk Ali and few others devoted their lives for the cause of Shah Waliullah.[23]

Later on, Haji Syed Abid Hussain, Maulana Mehtab Ali and the landlord of Deoband, Maulana Shaikh Nihal Ahmed and Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi picked up the threads and started a small Arabi school in Masjid-e-Chatta, which was later shifted to the present site and transformed into Dar-ul-uloom, Deoband.[24]

Among other factors, the selection of Deoband for Dar-ul-Uloom due to a divine sanction. Maulana Rafiuddin saw the Holy Kaba in the garden of Deoband in his dream.[25] This dream inspired Nanawtawi to start Dar-ul-Uloom in Deoband.

It was Friday, May 30, 1857, when a madrasa began under the shadow of a pomegranate tree in Masjid-e-Chatta.[26] Even today, the tree proudly stands there. Its first student was Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan and Mullah Mehmood was its first teacher,[27] whereas it was Haji Abid Hussain who first

collected funds. In the first year, the strength of students shot up to 78.[28]

The chief of the madrasa, Haji Abid Hussain, was dead against the idea of shifting it to the present site, but Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi persuaded him. And gradually the small madrasa was transformed into a grand Dar-ul-Uloom and it became an epicenter of educational and political activities. In 1876,[29] the foundation of a new building of Dar-ul-Uloom was laid after the Friday prayers. Many noted Islamic scholars, prominent citizens and people in large numbers attended the function. Hazrat Miyan laid the first brick of the foundation, followed by Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi and Nanawtawi.[30]

**First Body of Counsellors (Majlis-e-Shoora)**

The first body of counsellors of Dar-ul-Uloom had the following members:

1. Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi
2. Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi
3. Haji Abid Hussain
4. Zulfequar Sahab
5. Munshi Fazal Haq[31]

**Rules and Regulations**

Nanawtawi had formulated some basic principles for administration of Dar-ul-Uloom. They are briefly discussed as under:

1. **Public Donations:** Nanawtawi was fully conscious of the need of guarding Dar-ul-Uloom from the influence of the government as well as the rich people. He thought that government grants or donations from the rich people would harm the cause of Dar-ul-Uloom. Thus, he decided to run it on public donations and charity. This shows Nanawtawi's great foresightedness.[32]
2. **Refrain from Selfish People:** The second principle of Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband is that donations should be

accepted from those people who are selfless and don't crave for personal fame.[33]

3. **No Place for Autocracy:** Nanawtawi was fully aware of the adverse effects of arbitrary administration. Thus, adoption of the principle of democracy in administration became the next important criterion of Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband.[34]
4. **School Inspectors:** Mohtamims (school inspectors) should be bound by the decisions of the body of counsellors. Also there was a tradition of seeking advice of visitors to Dar-ul-Uloom.[35]
5. **Source of Income:** Dar-ul-Uloom has no regular or definite source of income, however it will continue to exist, Insha Allah. It will solely rely on Allah for its sustenance and try for a definite source of income, e.g. substantial property in the form of land or factory, besides donations from philanthropists.
6. **Loyalty:** The next principle relates to loyalty and honesty of counsellors of the body. They should remain loyal to Dar-ul-Uloom.[36]

Thus, these principles show that Dar-ul-Uloom was and is far from the arbitrary decisions of a particular individual or group. It rejects all possibilities of governmental interference. Mass contact is its chief characteristic.

A critical analysis of the basic rules shows that the school inspectors have little powers, but great responsibilities. All decision-making powers are entrusted with the body of counsellors, who, however, take into consideration the valuable opinions from public.

## Panel of Theologists

### *First Panel [1857-1872)*[37]

1. Syed Hazrat Shah Abdul Gani Dahelvi
2. Quddusullah Aziz
3. Haji Imdaddullah
4. Rashid Ahmed Gangohi

*Second Panel (1870-1884)*[38]

1. Hazrat Maulana Mohammed Qasim Sahab
2. Imam Rabbani Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi
3. Hazrat Maulana Yaqoob Sahab
4. Mehmood-ul-Hasan
5. Hazrat Maulna Hafiz Haji Abid Hussain
6. Hai Rafiuddin
7. Zulfequar Ali
8. Mehtab Ali[39]

*Third Panel (1884 -1920)*[40]

1. Imam Rabbani Hazrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi
2. Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan
3. Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani
5. Maulana Abdul Rahim Sahab[41]

From the preceding discussion it becomes very clear that the founders of Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband were those people who had played a vital role in the First War of Independence Revolt of 1857. Though they had to face defeat in the Rebellion, Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband successfully emerged on the scene and flourished in leaps and bounds. Dar-ul-Uloom's administration was in the hands of the body of counsellors. Its rules and regulations were against the will of the British Government and it was raised solely on the funds and contributions from general public.

Then, the birth of movements like Jamiat-ul-Ansar, Samrat-ul-Tarbiat and Nazarat-ul-Maroof, which had a great role in the country's freedom movement, once again proves the point that Dar-ul-Uloom's aim was to educate people and liberate the country from the foreign yoke.

Here, it should be noted that the credit for infusing the revolutionary spirit in the Deoband goes to Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan and his disciples like Maulana Sindhi

succeeded, it would have proved to be a nightmare for the British Government.

## SILKEN LETTERS' CONSPIRACY

Shaikh-ul-Hind Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan was a towering personality of Dar-ul-Uloom Deoband, who fulfiled the dream of Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi. Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan served Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband as a teacher. His life is full of revolutionary activities.

When Shaikh-ul-Hind Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan realized that it was impossible to gain freedom through peaceful means, he used some safe centers for the revolutionary activities and found Yaghistan as the most suitable place for his mission.[42] This was because its people were very bold and courageous, but they were also a divided house due to inter-tribal wars. Thus, the first challenge before Mehmood-ul-Hasan was to develop a feeling of unity and nationalism among these tribesmen.

With the intention of clearing decks for his revolutionary activities, Mehmood-ul-Hasan sent Maulana Saif-ur-Rehman from Delhi to Yaghistan.[43] Fazal Rabbi from Peshawar was also sent on this mission.[44] They were directed to work with a large number of students of Shaikh-ul-Hind and Hazrat Ahmed,[45] who was already working there on the same lines.

It was a very crucial period as the World War-I had just begun. The Britishers were succesful in hurting the sentiments of Muslims by involving Turkey in this war. After a great deal of persuasion, Haji Tarang Zai was also sent to Yaghistan. Then, what followed is the history. A fierce battle was fought against the British army in Yaghistan. The revolutionaries fought boldly and courageously and at one time it looked as if they were on the threshold of victory, but the enemies had very tactfully turned the tables on them.[46]

The British called for more troops from India and started

fighting without a king cannot be a 'jihad' as per Islamic tenets. Moreover, they started greasing the palms of Afghan Government officials and succeeded in turning the Afghan King, Amir Habibullah, in their favour.[47] All the above factors had far-reaching effects. First of all, it shattered the confidence of the masses, which proved a serious setback to the movement. Besides, the Britishers cut down the supply of food and cartridges of the revolutionaries.

Due to the alert British forces, it was impossible for Shaikh-ul-Hind to move towards Yaghistan. He, therefore, decided to seek the co-operation of Turkey and with this aim he went to the Arabs. While in the course of mobilizing the support of the Arab leaders, Shaikh-ul-Hind picked up his student, Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi, for the Yaghistan mission.

Sindhi was a staunch follower and trusted lieutenant of Mehmood-ul-Hasan. A highly motivated youth, Sindhi led his life wandering from one place to another in his endeavour to liberate the country.

## Sindhi in Kabul

The story of Sindhi's migration to Kabul is a long history of his revolutionary activities. Though Sindhi was not in favour of migration to Kabul, it was impossible for him to deny the order of his teacher and mentor, Mehmood-ul-Hasan. Sindhi migrated to Kabul in 1915.[48] On reaching Kabul, he found the atmosphere favorable to launch a mission against the Britishers. There, he learned that the movement had actually been started five decades back. Sindhi observed:

> "I learned that Mehmood-ul-Hasan was associated with the anti-British movement, started 50 years ago. But it was not as vibrant as it should have been and Shaikh-ul-Hind was looking for a person who could activate it. Now, I am proud to say that he had selected me for the job."[49]

This statement of Sindhi makes it clear that Mehmood-ul-

## Meeting with Nasrullah Khan

As soon as Sindhi learned that only formal political matters were attended to by the King, Habibullah Khan, he decided to meet his deputy, Sardar Nasrullah Khan,[50] who used to look after all non-political affairs. Sindhi had closed-door talks with Nasrullah Khan. Nasrullah Khan was greatly impressed by Sindhi's aims and objectives and expressed his willingness to cooperate him. This meeting was the first in the series outside India against the British rulers.

## Meeting with Habibullah Khan

On the invitation of Sardar Nasrullah Khan, Sindhi then reached his residence, where a meeting with the King, Habibullah Khan was held in the evening.[51] The King was also impressed by Sindhi's talk. Though the King didn't assure Sindhi of any practical help, he expressed his willingness in few words and orally advised Sindhi to carry on his work. For this gesture, Sindhi had expressed his gratitude to the King in his personal diary: "Here, I have to admit that without the King's agreement and advice, my work would not have got such an importance."[52]

This was the first successful meeting of the mission and conditions became favourable to some extent. At the beginning of the First World War, all the pro-independent Indian youths, who had been in different countries, gathered in Berlin and formed the Indian National Congress under the control of German External Affairs Ministry. Barkatullah and Hardayal were its members. Delegations from various countries had also come to Afghanistan to help the revolutionaries.

## German Delegation

Germany was involved in the World War I and as part of

who had migrated to Kabul, were also happy with this mission.

The role of Raja Mahendra Pratap through this mission assumed great importance. Raja belonged to a royal family of India, who left India during the First World War and established an Indian society in Berlin. Its important members were Maulvi Barkatullah and Chattopadhyay. The expenses of this society were borne by the German Government. The important thing about this German mission was the letters written by the German Chancellor.[54] The letters were written in German language, with a translated version attached to it. The letters were written with a view to creating hatred against the British Government.

The letters of the German Chancellor were addressed to the Afghan king, Habibullah Khan and the Nepal Raja.[55] They assumed great significance because the German Chancellor had sought help from Afghanistan for liberating India and in return promised all types of help. Thus, the Afghan king accorded a warm welcome to the German mission.

But, soon the mission members became unhappy over the attitude of the king, who gradually turned hostile. After the inspection of Afghan artillery, the German mission proposed that the king should wage a war against the British Government, but he deliberately turned down the proposal.[56]

## Turkey Delegation

Sultan of Turkey had also sent a delegation to Afghanistan. Maulana Barkatullah Bhopali and Raja Mahendra Pratap accompanied the delegation. The motive of the Turkey government was similar to that of Germany.

Delegations from Turkey and Germany were in Kabul with the sole aim of obtaining Amir Habibullah's help against the British Government. Amir Habibullah asked Maulana Sindhi to meet the members of these missions. Though these missions

## Formation of Junud-Ullah

"ہم نے کام کرنے والی ایک جماعت بنائی جس سے جنوداللہ کہا جاتا ہے۔۔۔اس نظام سے ہم
نے نوجوانوں کی باہمی رقابتوں کو دور کر سکے۔"[58]

(We have formed a working group named as *Junud-Ullah*. With this we have been able to sort out internal differences among the youths.)

Again by forming Junud-Ullah, Sindhi succeeded in sorting out the differences that had cropped up among the youths, who were arrested in Kabul while going to Turkey to take part in a war against the Britain.[59] Sindhi tried his best to carry on their mission once again by convincing them to stay and work with him as long as the Kabul government allowed them. In company of these youths, Sindhi had a feeling of his days at Nazarat-ul-Maroof. Junud-Ullah made progress gradually. It was the first revolutionary organization formed in exile.[60]

## Provisional Government and Sindhi

Joining the provisional government was one of the most important milestones in Sindhi's struggle against the British Government.

As the Afghanistan King, Habibullah Khan, didn't want to extend overt support,[61] these revolutionaries used to work with the permission of his deputy, Nasrullah Khan. Various secret meetings were held with him, in which various development programmes were chalked out, including the formation of the provisional government for Hindustan. Raja Mahendra Pratap and Maulvi Barkatullah were the founders of this provisional government. Later, they invited Sindhi to join as the minister for internal affairs.[62]

## Mission to Russia

After formation of the provisional government, it was

However, later they were sorted out and a delegation comprising Dr Khushi Mohammed[64] and Dr. Mathura Singh[65] was sent. Both the members were students of medicine.

They started off their journey towards Russia with the fake names of Mirza Mohammed Ali and Sardar Shamsher Singh.[66] They had three secret letters with them. One of them was written on a golden plate in appreciation of the Czar of Russia.[67] The second letter was for guards at the Russian-Turkish border, seeking their cooperation in sending these emissaries to *Tashqand*,[68] from where the golden plate was to be sent to the Governor General, who would send it to the Czar. The third letter was written to Governor General of Tashqand and the Prime Minister of Russia.[69]

In the third letter, Russia was urged to extend her co-operation as she was one of the most powerful countries and as such she should not remain aloof from India's concern. In this letter, Raja Mahendra Pratap also expressed his willingness to visit Russia in this regard, if the Czar so desired.[70]

The mission finally left for Russia. It came back after four months with an assurance by the diplomatic secretary that the Russian Government would consider the matter and inform them accordingly.

With the favourable response from the Russian Government, Raja Mahendra Pratap again decided to send two missions to Istanbul and Japan. Maulana Sindhi was given the charge of the mission for Istanbul,[71] whereas the mission to Japan was to be selected by Barkatullah Khan.[72] For Istanbul mission, Abdul Bari and Shujaullah were chosen,[73] while Dr Mathura Singh with Shaikh Abdul Kadar B.A., were picked up for the mission to Japan.[74]

**Mission to Istanbul**

پہلے مشن کے کامیابی میں راجہ صاحب دو مشن اور بھیجنے کا فیصلہ کیا ایک ہمارے منشاہ کے مطابق

(With success of the first mission, the Raja Sahab decided to send two more missions. As per our wish, one mission was sent to Istanbul. It consisted of our companions Abdul Bari B.A. and Dr. Shujaullah. The mission went to Istanbul via Iran.)

The Istanbul mission consisting of the most trusted revolutionary members, Abdul Bari and Shujaullah, started off its journey from Kabul. Before its departure, a secret meeting was held between Raja Mahendra Pratap, Obaidullah Sindhi and one of the mission members, namely Abdul Bari.[76] The meeting decided that the mission would carry letters to the Sultan of Turkey, Anwar Pasha, German Chancellor and one Chattopadhya, who was in Germany.[77] Besides these letters, the meeting also decided to convey orally to Anwar Pasha and German Chancellor that if a strong army of 60,000[78] was sent to Kabul, Afghanistan would raise a banner of revolt against the British Empire. The mission should also apprise the German Chancellor of the fact that the German mission in Kabul had failed because of the inability of its in-charge, Wan Hanting,[79] who didn't try to win the support of the Afghan King, Habibullah Khan which was necessary.

Armed with the letters and the oral message regarding the demand of 60,000 soldiers, the mission reached Heart (Afghanistan), where it met a German officer and apprised him of its plan. The German officer arranged for an Iranian guide, Mirza Agha.[80] Here, it is to be noted that the mission members were travelling in disguise, with the fake names of Mohammad Hasan (Abdul Bari) and Mohammad Younus (Shujaullah).

Along with the Iranian guide and one Jan Mohammad, who was going to Iran, the mission members crossed the Afghan border after four days' journey. Then they took two more days to reach Mehmoodabad (Iran),[81] where they decided to stay for a night. But, as fate would have it, the Iranian police arrested the mission members there. Then they were given into the custody of a Russian guard who checked

The mission members then were taken to Turbat, where they protested against their arrest,[82] but to no avail. Then they were escorted to Sidu and handed over to the British army. Again they were sent to Ber, where they were kept for ten days and imprisoned in Sistan for one and a half-months.[83] Later on, they were sent to Sandak, where the members of the mission to Japan (Mathura Singh and Abdul Qadar) were already in prison. Finally, members of the both the missions were sent to Lahore via Quetta.[84]

As mentioned earlier, Abdul Bari and Shujaullah were the most trusted revolutionary members, but surrendered before the brutal British forces and admitted that they were on a secret mission to Istanbul. During interrogation, Abdul Bari disclosed the following:

"میں نے تجویز کیا اگر روشن فکر ترکوں سے رابطہ قائم کیا جائیں تو اُن کو آسانی سے افغانستان کو ترقی دینے پر آمادہ کیا جاسکتا ہے۔"[85]

"I had proposed that if relations were established with the progressive Turks, it would be easy to convince them for development of Afghanistan."

From the above statement it becomes very clear that Abdul Bari was not only a trusted disciple of Maulana Sindhi, but he was also concerned about development of Afghanistan. He had told Maulana Sindhi umpteen times, that the then Turkey mission in Afghanistan was not yielding favourable results and, therefore, progressive Turk members should be called in so as to draw their attention towards the Afghan situation and achieve the desired objectives.

Apart from these revolutionaries, students who were studying in different countries also took part in the activities against the British rulers. The example of one Hasan Ali[86] proves this point beyond any doubt. He was a native of Bombay (now Mumbai) and was studying in Germany. In

the enemies pounced on him. He was arrested and produced before the court of Colonel Del and Captain Benett,[87] sentenced him to death. He was executed at Sistan as per the court order.[88]

This is just one example of how our students took part in the freedom struggle during their studies abroad. Not only did they take active part, but also, like Hasan Ali, offered the supreme sacrifice for the cause of their motherland.

## Letters to Shaikh-ul-Hind

When Abdul Bari and Shujaullah were going to Yaghistan, Shaikh Abdul Haq, a neo-Muslim,[89] was also sent along with them, who was carrying the letters of Maulana Mansoor Ali and Obaidullah Sindhi to Mehmood-ul-Hasan.

Obaidullah Sindhi had faith in this youth, therefore he had handed over those important letters, written on three pieces of silk cloth to him with instructions that they should be given to Shaikh Abdul Rahim of Hyderabad (Sindh),[90] who would arrange for their delivery to Mehmood-ul-Hasan, who was in Mecca during those days. But the youth gave those letters to Bahadur Haq Nawazkhan,[91] who in turn handed them over to Sir Michael.[92] Then what followed was the famous episode of the history.

The British Government started arresting people in Hindustan and after some days Mehmood-ul-Hasan was also arrested along with his compatriots in Mecca. After a long time, Obaidullah Sindhi learned that it was Khan Bahadur Rab Nawaz Khan, who was behind the exposure of his letters. To Obaidullah Sindhi, the news came like a bolt from the blue.

## Disclosure of Silken Letters

”۱۴/اگست کو ملتان کے خان بہادر رب نواز خان نے ملتان ڈویژن کے کمشنر کو زرد ریشمی کپڑے

[93] کے تین ٹکڑے دیکھائیں جس پر خوش خط اُردو لکھی تھی۔ انہوں نے بیان کیا کہ وہ ۱۴/اگست سے اُن

"On August 14, Khan Bahadur Rab Nawaz Khan of Multan showed the three pieces of silk cloth to the Commissioner of Multan Division, which contained beautiful Urdu script. He said that he was in possession of those letters since August 4. However, they could not be presented to the commissioner due his absence."

After getting the silk letters, written in attractive Urdu script from Shaikh Abdul Haq, Bahadur Rab Nawaz Khan showed them to the Divisional Commissioner of Multan, on August 14.[94] In fact, he had received those letters on August 4, but he could not show to the commissioner as the latter was out of station.

Khan Bahadur himself admitted this fact that he had received those letters from Shaikh Abdul Haq, a former coach of his sons who once went with his sons to Kabul in 1915. While giving those letters to Khan Bahadur, Abdul Haq said that he was coming from Kabul to hand over the letters to Abdul Rahim of Hyderabad (Sindh), who in turn was to send them to Madina, get their receipt and carry it back to Kabul.

After looking at the letters, the Commissioner of Multan termed the plan as a foolish act. He directed the Punjab CID officials to file a case in this regard and sent the letters to the British Government.[95]

Following the letters and information provided by Khan Bahadur, the British police laid hands on Abdul Haq, who, during interrogation admitted to being part of the conspiracy.

Then, needless to say, Khan Bahadur became a hero in the eyes of the British Government. He was rewarded with a certificate and medal for exposing the conspiracy of the silken letters and for showing loyalty to the government.

ضمیمہ اے A

# مولانا عبید اللہ کا خط شیخ عبد الرحیم کے نام

مورخہ ۱۰ر جولائی ۱۹۱۶ء

۹ر رمضان یوم دوشنبہ

(کابل) شیخ عبد الرحیم صاحب

سلام مسنون

آپ ضرور یہ امانت مدینہ میں حضرت مولانا کی خدمت میں کسی معتمد حاجی کی معرفت پہنچا دیں۔ یہ ایسا کام ہے کہ اس کے لئے مستقل سفر کرنا نقصان نہیں۔ اگر آدمی معتمد ہو تو زبانی یہ بھی کہہ دیں کے حضرت مولانا یہاں آنیکی بالکل کوشش نہ کریں۔ اور مولوی منصور اگر ساحج پر نہ آسکیں تو خیال فرمالیں کہ اس کا آنا ممکن نہیں۔

آپ اس کے بعد خود میرے پاس آنے کی کوشش کریں۔ کیونکہ یہاں بہت سے ضروری کام ہیں۔ ضرور آیئے۔

اگر خدانخواستہ آپ کو معتمد حاجی نہ مل سکے اور آپ خود بھی نہ جا سکیں تو مولوی حمد اللہ ساکن پانی پت سے اس معاملہ میں مدد لیں۔ یہ ضروری ہے۔ کہ اس حج کے موقعہ پر یہ اطلاعات حضرت مولانا کے پاس پہنچ جائیں۔ اور وہاں سے جو اطلاع ملے وہ براہ راست نہ ہو سکے تو مولوی احمد لاہوری کی معرفت ضرور ہمیں ملنی چاہئے۔

عبید اللہ عفی عنہ

Ramzan 9
July 10, 1916 (Monday),
Kabul.

Shaikh Abdul Rahim Sahab,
Assalaam Alaikum,

It is important to arrange its delivery through a reliable Haj pilgrim to Hazrat Maulana in Madina. The work is so easy that constant journey can be undertaken. If the person is more reliable, he may be told that Maulana should not try to come here.

After this work, you try to come to me. This is because there are many important works to be done here. Please, do come.

Unfortunately, if no reliable Haj pilgrim is found and you are also unable to go there, then seek help of Panipat-based Maulvi Hamdullah. It is very important that Maulana should get all this information during this Haj and his reply should reach us through Maulana Ahmed Lahori, in case it is not possible to send it directly.

S/d.
(Obaidullah Hanafi)

From the above letter, it is as clear as the daylight that, Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi first wrote a detailed letter (in two parts) to Mehmood-ul-Hasan (copy of which is given below) and then jotted down a covering letter asking Shaikh Abdul Rahim to arrange its delivery to the intended person in Madina (Mehmood-ul-Hasan). Besides his letter, Sindhi also attached a list of Junod-ullah soldiers. These letters afterwards became famous as the conspiracy of silken letters as they were written on silk cloth.[97]

Sindhi clearly mentioned that those letters were very important and they should be delivered to Mehmood-ul-Hasan through a reliable Haj pilgrim. In case no reliable person was found and if Shaikh Abdul Rahim was unable to go Madina, then the help of Maulvi Hamdullah of Panipat should be sought.[98]

This further throws light on the position of Shaikh Abdul Rahim. It shows Sindhi had full faith in his credentials and therefore he had entrusted the most confidential work to him. Actually, Sindhi wanted him to go to Madina, if no reliable person was found. Moreover, Sindhi wanted him to come to Kabul after giving the letters to Shaikh-ul-Hind, as many important jobs were to be done. This further shows that Shaikh Abdul Rahim was also an active member of the revolutionary group. And so is the position of Maulvi Hamdullah of Panipat, who was to be contacted if Abdul Rahim could not proceed to Madina and no reliable Haji was found.

Sindhi explicitly mentioned that the matter was very important and urgent as well. He wanted those letters to reach Shaikh-ul-Hind during that Haj only and reply should be sent through Maulana Ahmed Lahori.[99]

Last but not the least, Sindhi wanted to convey his leader Mehmood-ul-Hasan that he should stay in Madina and with the help of Saudi leaders try to gain support of Turkey, Iran and other countries for waging a war against the Britishers.

The following is a translated version of the original letter of Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi to Shaikh-ul-Hind Mehmood-ul-Hasan.[100]

## ضمیمہ A

### بغیر دستخط کا خط مورخہ ۹ رجولائی

از کابل

۸ ررمضان المبارک          روز ابتداء وسیلتہ یومی دغد حضرت مولانا صاحب مدظلہم

العالی

آداب و نیاز مسنونہ

جدہ کے بعد کا حال یہ ہے کہ بمبئی آرام و بے خطر پہنچے۔ بندر پر اسباب کی تلاش میں خدام سے دانستہ اغماض برتا گیا۔ الحمد للہ مولانا مرتضی صاحب کام ممکن خیال کرتے ہیں اس لئے ان کو کام میں نہیں لیا گیا۔ مولوی ظہور صاحب بمبئی استقبال کو پہنچے تھے۔ اور محمد حسین راندیر سے راندیر میں تحریک چندہ صرف سید صاحب کے خلاف سے ناکام رہی۔ راندیر خطیب مکرر جانیوالے تھے نہ معلوم کیا ہوا۔ قاضی صاحب نے بعد ملاحظہ والا نامہ سرپرستی قبول فرمائی۔ جماعت پر اعتماد بحال رکھکر کام کرنے کی اجازت دی۔ اس کام کو باضابطہ کرنے کے لئے ایک سالہ رخصت لینے کا قصد فرما رہے ہیں۔ جماعت کے ۲ سہ ممبر سرفروشی کر رہے ہیں۔ مطلوب الگ ہوگیا۔ سید نور ست مولانا رائے والے متفق و معاون ہیں حکیم صاحب پچاس روپیہ ماہوار مکان پر جا کر خود دیتے رہتے ہیں اور درمیان میں بھی ایک دوبارہ جاتے رہتے ہیں۔ اور گاہ بگاہ ڈاکٹر صاحب بھی حنیف کو جماعت دس روپیہ جیب خرچ دیتی ہے۔ وہ مکان پر ہی ہیں۔ مدرسہ نے ان سے کوئی ہمدردی نہیں

ہونے لگا۔امیر شاہ مولانا عبدالرحیم صاحب کے دستی کام کے لئے پڑا ہے۔مولانا مدرسہ سے ....... مرعوب ہیں۔مگر خدام کی صفائی فرماتے رہتے ہیں۔مولوی رامپوری بے بھی تائید سے کنارہ کیا مسعود بھی شکار ہو گیا۔

بندہ حسرت آزاد سے ملا دونوں بیکار ہو چکے ہیں کیونکہ بندہ کا لوٹنا حضور تک ممکن نہ تھا اس لئے آگے بڑھا۔

غالب نامہ احباب ہند کو دکھا کر حضرت یاغستان کے پاس لایا۔حاجی بھی ابھمند میں ہیں۔مہاجرین مہمند باجوڑ صوات بنیر وغیرہ علاقوں میں آگ لگا رکھی ہے۔ان علاقوں میں غالب نامہ کا اشاعت کا خاص اثر ہوا۔اس لئے ضروری ہے کہ حسب وعدہ غالب مصالحت ک وقت یاغستان کی خدمت کا خیال رکھا جائے۔صنعت جماعت ہند سے مہاجرین کو کافی امداد نہیں پہنچ سکی۔بندہ یاغستان ایک ماہ قیام کر کے وفد مہاجرین کے ساتھ کابل پہنچا۔مولانا سیف جماعت سے الگ ہو کر یہاں مقیم ہیں۔ان لے لئے دولت کی طرف سے کام کی تجویز ہو رہی ہے اعضائے وفد فضلین وہ عبدال عزیز مولانا تعلیم کی توجہات وحاجی عبدالرزق صاحب کی عنایت سے وفد نے دربار نصر اللہ میں رسائی کی ابتدائی کامیابی بھی ہوئی۔بندہ ان سے الگ باریاب ہوا۔حضور کے زیر اثر کام اور اس کے اصول کی تفصیل کی گئی۔خاص قبولیت ہوئی۔الحمد اللہ اور انشاءاللہ اس ذیل میں حاضر خدمت ہوں گا۔

یہاں کا حال یہ ہے یہاں فتاوی دسفرائے ترک وجرمن پہنچے کا اغراز پورا ہوا۔لیکن مقصد میں ناکام رہے۔وجہ یہ ہے کہ ترکی کا فرض تھا کہ ایام نہ طرف داری ایران اور افغنستان سے ان کی

تلافی کی ذمہ دار ہے۔اس لئے شریک حرب نہیں ہوسکتا اگر ضروری افسران انجنیران اسلاح روپیہ دیا جائیں اور بصورت غلبہ کفر عصمت واعانت کا عہد نامہ کیا جائے تو شرکت کے لئے تیار ہیں۔باایں ہمہ سردار نائب السلطنت عام سرحدی وزیر۔آفریدی۔مہمند۔ باجوڑ۔سوات۔بنیر۔چکیسر۔غوربند۔کرناہ کوہستان۔دیر۔چترال وغیرہ میں اپنا اثر منظم رکھتے اور ان سے وکلا طلب کرکے عہد شرکت بصورت جنگ لے رہے ہیں۔یہ کام ایک حد تک ہو چکا ہے سفراء جرمن واپس اور ترک مقیم ہیں۔مگر بے کار تعجب ہے کہ سفراء خالی ہاتھ آئے حتیٰ کہ کوئی کافی سند سفارت بھی نہ لائے۔ایسی صورت میں کیا وہ ہوسکتا ہے۔مولانا الناظم باعافیت ہیں۔دولت میں ایک حد تک اعتماد ہوگیا ہے۔انگریز ان کو یہاں جاسوس ثابت کرنے کی سعی کرتے رہتے ہیں۔جن کا کچھ نہ کچھ اثر بھی ہوتا ہے۔مگر الحمدللہ کو ان کو اب تک پوری کامیابی نہیں ہوئی۔

مہاجرین طلباء انگریزی اور بعض سکھ بھی اب یہاں حاجی عبدالرزق صاحب کی مدد نائب کی مہربانی سے آزاد ہیں اور مولانا الناظم کی زیر سرپرستی دے گئے ہیں۔مصارف بذمہ دولت ہیں۔کوئی سرکاری کام ان کے ذمہ نہیں ہے۔البتہ مولانا کے خاص کاموں میں بہ ایمائے نائب السلطنت دست وبازو ہیں۔جن کی تفصیل یہ ہے۔

ایک جمعیت ہندوستان آزاد کرانے والی اس کا صدر ایک ہندی راجہ مقیم کابل ہے۔جو کہ سلطان المعظم رقیصر جرمنی کے اعتماد نامہ کے ساتھ یہاں پہنچا ہے۔ناظم صاحب ومولوی برکت اللہ اس جماعت کے وزراء ہیں اس جماعت نے ہندوستان میں مراکز و دیگر دول سے معاہدات کرنے کے لئے حرکت کی ہے [illegible]

دوسری جماعت الجنود الربانیہ۔ یہ فوجی اصول پر مخصوص اسلامی جماعت ہے۔ جس کا مقصد اولیہ سلاطین اسلام میں اعتماد پیدا کرنا ہے۔ اس کا صدر جس کا نام فوجی قائدہ سے جنرل یا القائد ہے۔ حضور کو قرار دیا گیا ہے اور مرکز اصلی مدینہ منورہ اس لئے خیال ہے کہ حضور مدینہ منورہ میں رہکر خلافت علیا سے' افغانستان وایران کے ساتھ معاہدہ کی سعی فرمائیں۔ اور افغانستان کے متعلق 'نیز یاغستان کے متعلق تجویز کو خدام تک پہنچادینا کافی خیال فرمائیں۔

افغانستان شرکت جنگ کے لئے امور مذکورہ بالا کا طالب ہے۔ جسے اولیاں دولت عثمانیہ وخلافت ثانیہ تک پہنچانے کی جلد سے جلد تدبیر کیجئے۔ کیونکہ ہندوستان میں کفر پر کاری ضرب لگانے کی یہی ایک صورت ہے اہل مدرسہ مولوی محسن سید نور کے ذریعہ سے حضور کی ہند میں لانے لانے کی سعی میں ہیں۔ کیونکہ اب یہ معلوم ہوا ہے کہ حجاز میں بھی کام ہوسکتا ہے۔ ادھر انگریزوں میں پہلی سی عزت بوجہ عدم ضرورت اب نہیں رہی۔

قاضی صاحب حکیم صاحب ڈاکٹر صاحب مولانا رائے والے حضور کی مراجعت ہند کے سخت مخالف ہیں۔ خطرہ بہ وجہ قصہ غالب کے علم ہونے کے بذریعہ مطلوب اب پہلے سے بہت بڑھ گیا ہے۔ اس لئے ایسی کسی تحریک کو ہرگز ہرگز منظور نہ فرمایا جائے۔

مبلغ عطا ع حضور کے مکان پر اور سید نور کو ضرورت نہ ہونے کی وجہ سے جماعت کے سپرد کردیا گیا بندہ حصول قدم بوسی کی سعی میں ہے۔ اللہ تعالی سے اُمید ہے کے کامیاب ہوں گا۔ مولانا سیف

مسنون۔ مدنی خطوط ہند کی ڈاک کے حوالے کر دیے گئے تھے۔ ڈاکٹر شاہ بخش صاحب کی خدمت میں سلام مسنون عرض ہے۔ وسید ہادی وخدا بخش واحبیب اللہ غازی کو بھی۔

منصب داران جنود ربانیہ

الف: مربی (۱) سالار المعظم خلیفۃ المسلمین۔

(۲) سلطان احمد شاہ قاچار ایران

(۳) امیر حبیب اللہ خاں کابل

مردان (۱) انور پاشا (۲) ولی عہد دولت عثمانیہ (۳) وزیر اعظیم دولت عثمانیہ (۴) عباس حلمی پاشا (۵) شریف مکہ معظمہ (۶) نائب السلطنت کابل سردار نصر اللہ خاں (۷) معین السلطنت کابل سردار عنایت اللہ خاں (۸) نظام حیدر آباد (۹) والی بھوپال (۱۰) نواب رام پور (۱۱) نواب بہاولپور (۱۲) رئیس المجاہدین

ج: جنرل یا سالار (۱) سلطان المعظم حضرت مولانا محدث دیوبند ظلہ تعالیٰ

(۲) قائم مقام سالار کابل مولانا عبید اللہ صاحب

د: نائب سالار (یا لفٹننٹ جنرل) (۱) مولانا محی الدین خاں صاحب (۲) مولانا عبد الرحیم صاحب (۳) مولانا غلام صاحب بہاولپورہ (۴) مولانا تاج محمد صاحب سندھ (۵) مولوی حسین احمد صاحب مدنی

(۶) مولوی احمد اللہ صاحب حاجی صاحب ترنگ زئی (۷) ڈاکٹر انصاری (۸) حکیم عبد الرزاق صاحب (۹) ملا صاحب بابڑا (۱۰) کوہستانی (۱۱) جان صاحب باجوڑ (۱۲) مولوی ابراہیم صاحب کالوی

(۱۳) مولوی محمد میاں (۱۴) حاجی سعید احمد انبھیٹوی (۱۵) شیخ عبدالعزیز رحیم
آبادی

(۱۸) مولوی عبدالکریم صاحب عظیم آبادی (۱۹) مولوی عبداللہ غازی پوری (۲۰) نواب ضمیر
الدین احمد

(۲۱) مولوعبدالباری صاحب (۲۲) ابوالکام (۲۳) محمد علی (۲۴) شوکت علی
(۲۵) ظفر علی (۲۶) حسرت موہانی (۲۷) مولوی عبدالقادر قصوری
(۲۸) مولوی برکت اللہ بھوپالی (۲۹) پیر اسداللہ شاہ سندہ معین
اسالار (میجر جنرل) مولوی سیف الرحمٰن صاحب۔ مولوی حسن مرادآبادی۔

مولوی عبدانصاری

امیر سراج الدین بھاولپوری پاجانا عبدل الحالق۔ مولوی بشیر رئیس الجاہدین شیخ ارابیم سندھی
۔مولول محمد علی قصور۔ سید سلیمان ندوی عمادی غلام حسین آزاد سجانی۔ کاظم بے خوشی محمد۔ مولوح شاہ
اللہ۔ مولوی عندالباری مہاجر وکیل حکومت موقتہ ہند۔

د: ضابطہ (کرنل) شیخ عبدالقادر مہاجر شجاع اللہ مہاجر نائب دولت موقتہ ہند مولوی عبدالعزیز وکیل
وردخزب اللہ یا غثان۔ مولوی فضل ربی۔ مولوی عبدالحق لاہوری یہاں فضل
اللہ۔ صدر الدین۔ مولوی عبداللہ سندھی۔ مولوی ابومحمد احمد لاہوری۔ مولوی احمد علی نائب ناظم نظارۃ
[illegible]

۔مولوی محمد مبین ۔مولوی یوسف گنگوہی ۔مولوی رشید احمد انصاری ۔مولوی سید عبد السلام فاروقی ۔حاجی احمد جان سہارنپوری

(ز: نائب ضابطہ لفٹنٹ کرنل) فضل محمد ث ۔محمد حسن بی ۔اے ۔مہاجر ۔شیخ عبد اللہ ۔بی ۔اے مہاجر ۔رحمت علی بی ۔اے مہاجر ۔عبد المجید بی ۔اے مہاجر ۔حاجی شاہ بخش سندھی مولوی عبد القادر ۔دین پوری ۔مولوی غلام نبی ۔محمد علی سندھ ۔حبیب اللہ

ح: میجر ۔ شانواز ۔عبد الرحمن ۔عبد الحق

ط: کپتان محمد سلیم ۔کریم بخش

ی ۔لفٹنٹ نارشاہ

(نوٹ) ایک اور فہرست میں علی سندھی اور حبیب اللہ کا نام میجر کی فہرست میں درج ہے۔

## MAULANA OBAIDULLAH'S LETTER TO MEHMOOD-UL-HASAN

Ramzan 8,
Sunday, Kabul.

Hazrat Maulana,

This is about the journey after Jeddah. We reached Bombay safe and sound. There was no strict checking on the port. Maulana Murtuza Sahab believes the work is impossible. Therefore, he has not been brought. Maulana Zahoor Sahab was in Bombay to receive us. Mohammad Hussain Randeer's funds drive failed because of the opposition by Syed Sahab. Qateeb of Randeer was to go once again, but I don't know what happened. Qazi Sahab finally agreed to help and by keeping faith, allowed the mission to work. He intends to go on a year's leave so as to work systematically. Every third member of the mission is taking part in the struggle. Matloob departed. Syed Noor is considerate and helpful. Every month Hakeem Sahab goes to the house and pays Rs. 50. He also goes there once or twice in between. Doctor Sahab also goes to house occasionally. The party pays Rs. 10 as pocket money to Haneef. He is at home. The school didn't favour him. The school authorities are busy in serving the government. Maulana is impressed with the school and used to instruct servants. Maulvi Rampuri also remained aloof from extending support and Masood did the same.

I met Hasrat Azad. Both have been rendered jobless. Since it was impossible for me to return to Hasnoor, I moved forward.

After showing the *Ghalib Nama* to friends in Hindustan, I brought it to Yaghistan. Now, Haji is also in Mahmand. Immigrants have spread fire in Mahmand, Yajod, Sawat, Baneer etc. The publication of *Ghalib Nama* has created a good impact in these places. Therefore, it is necessary that Yaghistan

staying here after leaving the party. He has an offer from the government. The delegation comprises Fazlain and Abdul Aziz. The delegation is successful in having access to the court of Nasrullah with the help of Maulana Al-Nazim and Haji Abdul Razzakh Sahab. I was given an audience with him (Nasrullah Khan) in private. He was apprised of all details of the work. He has expressed his approval. If Allah wishes, I will meet you in this regard.

The situation at this end is as follows: German and Turk fatwas (decrees) and their ambassadors reached here, but couldn't achieve success. The reason is Turkey should have inquired about their needs and requirements through Iran and Afghanistan, and should have tried to fulfill them and also must have signed a pact of friendship as per the prevailing conditions. Afghanistan neither has arms for a big battle, nor funds to meet the losses. Therefore, she cannot participate in a war. If necessary arms, funds, officers and engineers are given and an agreement is made to compensate losses in case of a defeat, then Afghanistan is ready to take part in a war. The Deputy Prime Minister (Nasrullah Khan) and Defence Minister would have made their influence stronger in places like Afridi, Mahmand, Yajod, Sowat, Baneer, Chakser, Ghaurband, Karna, Kohastan, Deer, Chitrar etc. and would have received oaths about their participation in a war. This work has been completed to a certain extent. Ambassadors of Germany have departed. Turkish ambassadors are staying, but they are useless. It is surprising that they have come empty handed. They have not brought any letter from the embassy. What can be done in this situation? Maulana Al-Nazim is fine. We have gained trust of the government to some extent. Attempts are being made to prove the Britishers as spies. This has been proving effective to some extent, but has not been a complete success.

Migrated students, some Britishers and Sikhs are free with the help of Haji Abdul Razzakh Sahab and due to the mercy of the Deputy Prime Minister. Maulana Al-Nazim looks after them. Maulana Al-Nazim has not been entrusted with any government responsibility, but he is involved in some

importantal works with the permission of the Deputy Prime Minister. The details of which are as under:

There is one group from Hindustan that is making efforts for freedom. Its president is a Hindu Raja, who is staying in Kabul. He has reached here after gaining the trust of Turkish and German kings. Nazim Sahab and Maulvi Barkatullah are its ministers. This group is making efforts for agreements with like-minded people. It has achieved initial success. Students have a main role in this work, some of whom will meet you after securing power. Insha Allah.

The other group is Junud-ur-Rabaniya. It is an Islamic group formed on military principles and aims at bringing unity among all Muslim rulers. You have been appointed as its head and will be called as General or Al-Qaed as per the military principles. Its headquarters will be in Madina. Therefore, you should stay there and try to secure agreements with Turkey, Afghanistan, and Iran. Apart from this, you will send proposals regarding Afghanistan and Yaghistan to Qudam.

Regarding participation in a war, Afghanistan wants the above mentioned conditions to be fulfilled. Inform the Turkish government in this regard, as early as possible. Because, this is the only option to strike hard at infidels. Attempts are on to bring you to India through Maulvi Mohsin Syed Noor. This is because it is learnt that the work can be done in Hajaz also. Here, the Britishers are not looked upon as they once used to be.

Qazi Sahab, Hakeem Sahab and Dr. Sahab are opposed to your frequent visits to Hindustan. Threat has increased especially after the episode of 'Ghalib Nama', therefore no such programme should be granted permission.

House has been given to the party. I plan to meet you and hope I will succeed by the grace of Allah. Maulana Nazim, Maulana Saif Fazlain, Abdul Aziz and all the migrated youths say Salaam to you. Convey our Salaam to Aziz Hussain Wahed, Maulana Hussain and his father and brothers, Hurmatullah and Ahmed Jan Sahat. Letters of Madani have been posted. Convey our Salaam to Shah Baqt, Syed Hadi, Kuda Baqsh and Abibullah Ghazi.

Obaidullah Sindhi had attached a list of office-bearers of the Junud-ur-Rabbaniya.

**Junud-ur-Rabbaniya**

**Patrons:** (1) Salarul Muazam Khalifat-ul-Muslameen (2) Sultan Ahmed Shah Khachar, Iran and (3) Amir Habibullah Khan, Kabul.

**Office-bearers:** (1) Anwar Pasha (2) Wali Ahad Daulate Osmania (3) Prime Minister of Daulat-e-Osmani (4) Abbas Halmi Pasha (5) Sharif-e-Mecca (6) Deputy Prime Minister of Afghanistan, Nasrullah Khan (7) Moin-us-Saltanute, Kabul, Sardar Inayattullah Khan (8) Nizam, Hyderabad (9) Wali-e-Bhopal (10) Nawab Rampur (11) Nizam, Bhawalpur, and (12) Rais-ul-Mujaheedin.

**Salar (General):** (1) Sultan Muazam Hazrat Maulana Muhaddis, Deobandi (2) Resident General of Kabul, Maulana Obaidullah Sahab.

**Naib Saalar (Lieutenant General):** (1) Maulana Mohiuddin Khan Sahab (2) Maulana Abdul Rahim Sahab (3) Maulana Ghulam Muhammad Sahab (4) Maulana Taj Muhamad Sahab (5) Maulvi Hussain Ahmed Madani (6) Maulvi Haji Tarangzai (7) Dr Ansar (8) Hakeem Abdul Razzakh Sahab (9) Mullah Sahab Babra (10) Kohastan (11) Jaan Sahab (12) Maulvi Ibrahim Sahab (13) Maulana Muhammad Miyan (14) Haji Saeed Ahmed Ambhetwi (15) Shaikh Abdul Aziz Shavis (16) MaulviAbdul Karim Sahab (17) Maulvi Abdul Aziza Rahim Abadi 18) Maulvi Abdul Rahim Azeem Abadi (19) Maulvi Abdullah Ghazipuri (20) Nawab Zameeruddin Ahmed (21) Maulvi Abdul Bari Sahab (22) Abul Kalam (23) Muhammad Ali (24) Shaukat Ali (25) Zafar Ali 26) Hasrat Mohani 27) Maulvi Abdul Qadar Khaswari (28) Maulvi Barkattulah Bhopali (29) Peer Asadullah Shah Sindhi.

**Moin Saalar (Major General):** (1) Maulvi Saif-rul-Raham (2) Maulvi Hasan Moradabadi (3) Maulvi Abdullah Ansar (4) Meer Sirajuddin Bhawalpuri (5) Pachala Abdul Qaliq (6) Basheer Rais-ul-Mujaheedin (7) Shaikh Ibrahim Sindhi (8) Maulvi Muhammad Ali Khasur (9) Syed Suleman Nadvi (10) Umadi Ghulam Hussain Azad (11) Kazim Bey

(12) Khushi Muhammad (13) Maulvi Sanaullah and (14) Maulvi Abdul Bari.

**Colonel:** (1) Shaikh Abdul Qadir (2) Muhajir Shujaullah (2) Maulvi Abdul Aziz Wakil (3) Maulvi Fazal Rabi (4) Maulvi Abdul Haq Lahori (5) Miyan Fazalullah (6) Sadruddin (7) Maulvi Abdullah Sindhi (8) Maulvi Abu Muhammad Lahori (9) Maulvi Ahmed Ali (10) Shaikh Abdul Rahim Sindhi (11) Maulvi Muhammad Sadiq (12) Wali Muhammad (13) Maulvi Aziz Gul (14) Khwaja Abdul Hai (15) Qazi Ziauddin M.A. (16) Maulvi Ibrahim (17) Abdul Rasheed B.A. (18) Maulvi Zahoor Muhammad (19) Maulvi Muhammad Mubeen (20) Maulvi Muhammad Yousuf (21) Maulvi Rasheed Ahmed Ansari (22) Maulvi Syed Abdus Salaam Farooqui and (23) Haji Saharanpur.

**Lieutenant Colonel:** (1) Fazal Muhammad (2) Muhammad Hasan B.A (3) Shaikh Abdullah B.A. (4) Zafar Hasan B.A. (5) Allah Nawaz Khan B.A. (6) Rahmat Ali B.A (7) Abdul Hameed B.A. (8) Haji Shah Baqsh Sindhi (9) Maulvi Abdul Qadar Deenpuri (10) Maulvi Ghulam Nabi (11) Muhammad Ali Sindhi and (12) Habibullah.

**Major:** (1) Shahnawaz (2) Abdur Rahman and (3) Abdul Haq.

**Captain:** (1) Muhammad Salim and (2) Karim Baqsh.

**Lieutenant:** Nadir Shah

[NOTE: In another list Muhammad Ali Sindhi and Habibullah figured as majors.]

Now, what follows is the second part of Sindhi's letter. This part is basically about the Provisional Government.

## احوال انجمن دیگر بنام حکومت موقتہ ہند

ایک ہندوستانی رئیس مہندر پرتاب ساکن بندرابن جسے آریاؤں کی جماعت سے خاص تعلق ہے۔ اور ہندوستانی راجگان سے واسطہ در واسطہ ملتا ہے گذشتہ سال جرمنی پہنچا۔ قیصر سے ہندوستان کے مسئلہ میں ایک تصفیہ کر کے اس کا ایک خط بنام رؤساء ہند و امیر کابل لایا۔

حضرت خلیفۃ المسلمین نے بھی قیصر کی طرح اسے اپنا وکیل ہندو بنایا اس کے ساتھ مولوی برکت بھوپالی جو جاپان و امریکہ میں رہ چکے ہیں۔ برلن سے ہمراہ ہوئے۔

قیصر کے ایک قائم اور سلطان المعظم کے ایک افسر اسی کے ساتھ کابل آئے۔ یہ لوگ میرے کابل پہنچنے سے دس روز قبل پہنچ چکے تھے۔ انھوں نے ہندؤں کے فوائد کی تائید میں ہندوستانی مسئلہ امیر صاحب کے سامنے پیش کیا اور کابل میں دونوں نے ایک انجمن کی بنام مذکورہ بالا بنیاد ڈالی۔ اس کا کام یہ ہے کہ وہ ہندوستان کے معاملات مستقبل میں دول عظمیٰ سے معاہدات کرے۔

ایسے اسباب پیدا ہو گئے کہ انھوں نے مجھ سے اس انجمن میں شامل ہونے کی درخواست کی۔ میں نے اسلامی مفادات کی حفاظت کی نظر سے قبول کیا۔

(ا) چند روز کے مباحثات کے بعد اس انجمن نے قبول کرلیا کہ افغانستان اگر جنگ میں شرکت کرتا ہے تو ہم اس کے شاہزادہ کو ہندوستان کا مستقبل بادشاہ ماننے کو تیار ہیں اور اس قسم کی درخواست امیر صاحب کے یہاں پیش کردی۔ لیکن چونکہ امیر صاحب ابھی شرکت جنگ کے لئے تیار نہیں اس لئے معاملہ ملتوی رکھا ہے۔

روس کی انگریزوں سے برہمی میں جس کے فیصلہ کے لئے کچر جاتا ہوا افرقاب ہوا۔ ممکن ہے کہ سفارت مذکورہ کا اثر بھی شامل ہو۔

(۳) ایک سفارت براہ ایران قسطنطنیہ اور برلین گئی ہے۔ اس دونوں ہمارے مہاجر طالب علم ہیں۔ امید ہے کے حضور میں حاضر ہو کر

مورد عنایت ہوں گے۔

(۴) اب ایک سفارت جاپان اور چین کو جانے والی ہے۔

(۵) ہندوستان میں پہلی سفارت بھیجی گئی وہ زیادہ کامیاب نہیں ہوئی۔

(۶) اب دوسری سفارت جاری ہے

(۷) تھوڑے دنوں میں ایک دوسری سفارت برلن جانے والی ہے۔

جرمن سفارت میرے ذاتی تعلقات بہت اعلیٰ درجہ پر ہیں جس میں اسلامی فوائد میں پوری مدد ملے گی۔

اس حکومت موقتہ میں راجہ پرتاپ صدر ہیں۔ مولوی برکت اللہ بھوپالی وزیر اعظم اور احقر وزیر ہند۔

فقط والسلام

(عبید اللہ)

"Mahendra Pratap, who is a rich person from Bandraband and descendant of Hindustani rulers having close association with Aryans, met the German Chancellor last year and after resolving the matter concerning India, he brought a letter addressed to the Kabul King and the Indian elites in this regard.

Like German Chancellor, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Muslameen also accepted him as Indian representative. Maulvi Barkatullah Bhopali, who had stayed in Japan and America, accompanied Pratap from Berlin. Representatives of the Chancellor and Turkish Government were also with them and had reached Kabul 10 days before my arrival. They put up the issue of India before the King and later formed an organisation called Provisional Government.

They requested me to join the organisation. I readily accepted their request keeping in view the interest of Islam.

1. After discussing the issue for some days, this organisation arrived at a conclusion that if Afghanistan takes part in a war, India will accept her prince as a future King. This issue was also brought to the notice of the King, but since he was not ready for the war, the issue was kept in abeyance.
2. A delegation was sent to Russia by this Provisional Government, which comprised a Hindu and a Muslim immigrant. Now, an emissary of Russia is due to arrive.
3. Delegations have left for Constantinople and Berlin via Iran. They comprised immigrants. Hope they will call on you.
4. Now, one more delegation is to leave for Japan and China.
5. The first delegation was sent to India, which had a little success.
6. Now, a second delegation is being planned.
7. After some days, a second delegation will go to Berlin.

I have good relations with the German Embassy, which will prove beneficial for the Islamic cause.

Raja Mahendra Pratap is the President of the Provisional Government, while Maulvi Barkatullah Bhopali is the Prime Minister and the undersigned is a Minister.

Sincerely,
(Obaidullah)

A cursory glance at the letters shows that Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi has given a detailed report on the then prevailing situation to Mehmood-ul-Hasan, who was in Madina those days. The first part of the letter begins with Sindhi's journey from Jeddah[101] onwards, with details of who was doing what, how and where. The second part is about the provisional government and the various missions planned. However, still there is a need to highlight some important issues that gave sleepless nights to the British authorities.

Their first cause of worry was the widespread network of revolutionaries and their access to vital and powerful countries like Turkey and Germany. The revolutionaries were almost on the threshold of getting support of these countries. Turkish and German missions to Afghanistan, Ghalib Nama and Afghanistan's willingness to participate in the war against the British on the condition of supply of arms and troops prove this point. According to the letter, Sindhi had written about the Afghanistan's demand for troops to Mehmood-ul-Hasan, who in return was to convey it to Turkey.[102]

Secondly, the letter reveals that the revolutionaries had already made a provisional government and under the guidance of Mahendra Pratap and Maulvi Barkatullah it was mobilising support by sending missions to various countries.

The British became worried after knowing that an army of young revolutionaries called Junud-ur-Rabbaniya was formed. As per the list of office-bearers of this organisation, the Britishers further learned that it was a big conspiracy involving patrons like Sultan Ahmed Shah Khachar of Iran and Amir Habibullah Khan of Kabul, and revolutionary leaders like Shaikh-ul-Hind, Mehmood-ul-Hasan, and Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi.

Initially, the British Government dubbed the letters as insignificant and termed the whole plan as a tomfoolery.[103] But when it initiated an inquiry into the episode, it was found came to know that there was a real conspiracy likely to cause far and wide repercussions.

Further, the inquiry shows that the government was shaken due to the conspiracy, spread from Kabul, Yaghistan, India, Madina and its attempts to seek the help of big and powerful countries like Turkey, Germany, Japan and Russia.

Following are some of the correspondences and reports of the British' officials exchanged during the course of their inquiry.[104]

TOP SECRET

**Part-I**

Political and secret report of the silken letters conspiracy in Afghanistan. If any paper is extracted from this file, it should be reported to the Department of Political Records.

I hope these papers will prove useful to the defence investigation.

These papers are very important for India regarding Turkey and Afghanistan.

J.W. Hough
August 1, 1918

Then, a Viceroy has the following to say regarding the conspiracy. His report dated September 15, 1916 states:

"Obaidullah wrote a secret letter to Mehmood-ul-Hasan, who lives in Madina. The latter was caught and was handed over to the authorities on July 9. The writer of this letter is a renowned Indian, who incites people to revolt. He went to Hajaz last year and from there he reached Afghanistan. He maintained close relations with the German mission hence conspiracy took place after the visit of German mission to India.

The receiver of this letter had a close relationship with

the religious school of Deoband and went to Hajaz in September 1915, where he turned into a gang leader of notorious rebels.

The messenger, who brought these letters is an Indian citizen, who went to Kabul in 1915 with students from Lahore and is still residing in Kabul. Following is the summary of the letter:

The German mission was given a red carpet welcome in India, but they failed in their mission, since Turkey denied any assistance or training to the Afghan military. They even denied having any agreement with Afghanistan. But if Turkey agrees on these two points and in case of victory of infidels, if it promises protection to Afghanistan, then it is ready to take part in Jihad.

Meanwhile, Amir Nasrullah Khan is using his influence with independent tribesmen. And it is said that there are two groups:

(A) Muslim Rescue Army (*Junud-ur-Rabbaniya*): Its aim is to unite all Muslim kings and rulers. It will comprise 11 field marshals and fifth of them will be the Sharif of Mecca. And in its hierarchy, there will be many Indians, who are known for their rebellious activities. Provisional Government: Raja Mahendra Pratap will be its President, while Barkatullah will be the Prime Minister. Its activities are mentioned below:

(B) An ambassador has been sent to Russia and soon a representative of Russia will arrive in Kabul. Ambassadors are also being sent to Constantinople and Berlin through Iran.Ambassadors will soon leave for Japan and China. An ambassador was also sent to India, but there is no positive result. Again ambassadors are being sent to Berlin and India."

The above mentioned file prepared by J.W. Hough and the report by the viceroy clearly show that the movement against the British was gaining momentum like never before. As such, the British authorities considered the matter as the most dangerous and treated it as a top secret. They were fully aware that if the movement was not quelled in time, it would snowball into a major crisis and would ultimately overthrow the British government.

Therefore, considering the seriousness of the situation, the government machinery took all the necessary measures and arrested the main leader of the movement, namely Mehmood-ul-Hasan, from Madina and scores of other volunteers in India as well.

And needless to say, the letters of Maulana Obaidullah prove that the revolutionaries were working on a concrete plan and their network was widespread from Afghanistan to Madina. They were doing their best with whatever means were available. By froming Provisional Government and Junud-ur-Rabbani (Muslim Rescue Army), they wanted to unite all for the cause of freedom from the British yoke.[105]

Thus, it proves that the criticisms discounting the supreme' sacrifices and serious efforts of the ulema in the freedom struggle don't hold water. In fact, the ulema led the freedom movement from the front and made supreme sacrifices whenever the situation demanded.

It is also evident from the letters that Nasrullah Khan was against the British, whereas the Kabul King (Habibullah Khan) had leanings towards the British.[106]

The British forces started arresting prominent persons who were directly involved in the conspiracy. The British authorities learned about the missions to Istanbul and Germany. Later, the British Government also learned that a strong group of revolutionaries was working against its interest in Russia.

Again, a second report by the same viceroy on the following day, i.e. September 16, 1916 (His first report was prepared on September 15, 1916)[107] shows how the government machinery was taking swift actions in order to counter the conspiracy. He writes:[108]

IMPORTANT

By Viceroy, Foreign Department, September 16, 1916, p. 3820, Secret, Afghanistan

The British agent had reported that, on 6th September afternoon he (Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi) had called on the

Amir. The Amir met him in a closed room, where there was no third man. The Amir expressed his displeasure over the aims and conditions of the German mission. He said they had left Kabul in utter displeasure and by then they must have crossed the border. Then, he mentioned the names of Kazim Baig, Barkatullah and Pratap and disclosed that they were staying in Kabul. He further said that he was also anxious to know as to how to get rid of these people, as they were his guests. Later, he assured that they would leave soon. He then took an oath that he would never change his decision and always obey England.

This proves the real aim of the meeting. He said that he had received a report in Peshawar about two persons, namely Qairuddin and Ahmed, spreading rumours in Teerah. They introduced themselves as emissaries of Turkey and they were sent from Kabul. He mentioned that the first of them is the former teacher of a military college, who was suspended last year for inciting students to indulge in politics. The second is bread-maker from a royal kitchen, who was also suspended for lack of skills. They secretly went to Teerah and they are not Turkish emissaries. The Amir has not given any permission to them to do such things.

Then, he concluded saying that whatever he had explained could be passed on to the British Government by an agent so that the misunderstandings would be cleared and that every person should take care of his prestige and position these days.

Again, what follows is an intelligence report dealing with the conspiracy. It shows that the government had kept a strict vigil on Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband. Initially, the government officials were confused as to who was the real conspirator—whether it was Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi or his namesake Turk, Obaidullah Afandi. But later their confusion was cleared.

**The Intelligence Report[109]**

The conspiracy of Obaidullah Sindhi is briefly mentioned in the file marked with the alphabet (A).

That Punjabi man, who was a teacher in Dar-ul -Uloom, should not be misunderstood with the Turk, Obaidullah

Afandi, who was arrested in Iran, but had fled to a place somewhere between Kirman and Bunder Abbas.

The conspiracy may appear ridiculous to the English people, but Muslims, particularly Indian Muslims, trust every foolish thing. Thus, undoubtedly, a threat still persists there, as Sir C. Cliveland mentioned in his report on pp. 13-12 (File B):

> "The plan, which was limited to few people, may spread on mass level sooner or later. This is also possible that this thought might have occurred to Barkatullah and Mahindra Pratap and not to Obaidullah. It is also related to the revelations, which Mahindra did on the request of German Chancellor in front of the Amir about the relation of Afghanistan, Germany, Australia, Hungary and Turkey. Though Iran is not mentioned, it is also a part of the chain."

Exchange of these letters and telegrams amongst the British officials further strengthens the assertion that the British Government saw all portents of a big war in the conspiracy and left no avenue unexplored to curb it. But the conspiracy didn't achieve much success. History is witness to the fact that the conspiracy had fizzled out, because of drastic changes in the international politics, which, of course, is another subject for research.

## CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE BRITISH OFFICIALS

JRS
March 23,1918

Mr. Horse,

Will you send these reminders to Major W, provided if you like it proper.[110]

JRS
January 14, 1918.

Major Willingar (Major W)
Hope you would like to read it. (Four editions)[111]

JWH
March 18, 1918.

Mr Horse,
Thank very much.

Willingar[112]

Draft Telegram p. 4260[113]
Secretary of State

With reference to the letter that you have sent on September 15, regarding Abdullah, could you send five more copies of the Clive Land's note and related papers.

S/d
(Hartzal)
October 19, 1916

Copy of telegram from Viceroy dated
October 25, 1916[114]

Received at London Office Secret Hartzal,[115]
pp. 44-43

1916

With reference to your telegram dated 19th instant, we are sending more copies regarding Obaidullah in the next week.

Sir A. Hartzal,

Received more copies of the papers relating to Obaidullah by this post on the following topics:

1. Reminder on the condition of Muslims in India.
2. Anjuman-e-Khudame Kaba.
3. Biased Indians and Wahabi sect.
4. Mission of Wahabi sect.

The Rowelt report states: "The most prominent among those who had impressed the thoughts of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan was Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi."[117]

The above statement of the report is a travesty of the truth. Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi did not impress Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan. In fact, it was vice versa.

The report further mentioned that Obaidullah Sindhi wanted to launch an international movement (Pan-Islamic) against the British with the help of renowned scholars from Deoband,[118] but the administrator and some members of the school committee had expelled him along with his supporters. Obaidullah Sindhi was expelled from Deoband as it was the need of the hour. Moreover, the British intelligence had compelled the administrator to keep him from the school for time being. Therefore, he was just shifted to Delhi, where he carried on his revolutionary activities through Nazarat-ul-Maroof as Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi himself said,

> "On the order of Shaikh-ul-Hind, I was transferred from Deoband to Delhi in 1913 (Hijri 1331) to work with Nazarat-ul-Maroof there."[119]

The following statement of Obaidullah Sindhi clearly proves the point. "In Deoband, Shaikh-ul-Hind introduced me with his party. Then I was transferred to Delhi, where I was introduced to Dr Ansari, who in return introduced me to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad."[120]

The above statement makes it clear that Sindhi's work was transferred from Deoband to Delhi not because of any differences, but as part of a strategy and a conspiracy against the British. A British intelligence report quoted: "For this purpose, he established an organisation named as Jamait-ul-Ansar. It is also known as Old Boys Association of Deoband."[121]

The observation of the British intelligence defied the reality. Actually, Jamait-ul-Ansar was established by Shaikh-ul-Hind Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan. Initially, it worked for the cause of education, but gradually it turned into a revolutionary organisation. Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi was appointed its secretary. The main aim of Jamiat-ul-Ansar was to bring youths on a single platform.

Regarding the activities of Deoband, the report mentioned that the school was free from political influence.[122] However, reality was different. Jamiat-ul-Ansar was playing an active role in the revolutionary activities. Its leaders had participated in the battle of Shamli. In fact, its members were absent when a British team had visited the school and the report was mainly based on insufficient and wrong information.

Another shortcoming of this intelligence report was that it showed Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi as a central figure of the revolutionary movement, which is a travesty of the truth.

The Rowelt Committee Report mentions, "Following Sindhi's instructions, Hasan Miya Mehmood, Maulana Mansoor Ali and others left Hindustan on September 8, 1915 and instead of proceeding towards North, they went to Khitta-e-Hijaz."[123]

In fact, Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan had not followed the instructions of Obaidullah Sindhi. He went there because the British intelligence was active. He wanted to reach the central place of the movement (Yaghistan) as early as possible, but due to the constant threat of arrest, he went to Saudid Arabia instead.

In Saudi Arabia, Mehmood-ul-Hasan expressed his desire to Ghalib Pasha, but seeing the critical condition the latter advised the former to carry out his mission from Jeddah.[124]

The report further stated that Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan had differences with the school Mohtamim (inspector), Mohammad Ahmed and Nayab Mohtamim (deputy inspector), Maulana Habib-ur-Rahman. This was why he had joined the group of Obaidullah and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.[125]

Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani termed the report as baseless. He clarified that there were no differences as the report had mentioned. When the governor had visited Deoband,[126] Mehmood-ul-Hasan was actually having discussions with Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad in a separate room. The governor might have presumed that since Mehmood-ul-Hasan was conspicuous by his absence, he must have developed differences with the school authorities and had left the school.[127]

**Directory**

The British government had ordered a thorough inquiry into the conspiracy of the silk letters. It found that more than 222 revolutionaries, most of them ulema, were behind the conspiracy. The government then made a separate directory of those involved in it. Following is a brief account of some of them.

**1. Mohammed Ali B.A. of Khasur:** He was a major general of Junud-e-Rabbaniya. He was invited by Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi for inciting people to rebellion in Kabul. He was an active member in the formation of the provisional government and was present in various meetings with the German Mission. He was sent to northern-west frontier along with the letter of Nasrullah Khan to spread revolutionary activities. The British Government was doubtful of his presence, but at the time of inquiry they came to a conclusion that he was present in Chamar Qand.[128]

**2. Mohammed Ali B.A. of Sindh:** Mohammed Ali B.A. of Sindh also prominently figured on the list of Junud-e-Rabbaniya. The directory shows him as the brother of the administrator, Ahmed Ali, of Nazarat-ul-Maroof. The British Government, however, was doubtful of his arrival in India. He was linked with the silk letters conspiracy. He came along with the letters of Raja Mahendra Pratap.[129]

**3. Mohammed Hasan B.A.:** He was shown as a lieutenant colonel of Junud-e-Rabbaniya.[130]

**4. Mohammed Hasan Maulvi of Muradabad:** Mohammed Hasan Maulvi of Moradabad was a major general of Junud-e-Rabbaniya and an important member of Deoband Committee.[131]

**5. Mohammed Hasan Muhajir:** He played a very vital role and migrated to the frontier along with the letters of Sardar Nasrullah Khan, addressing various ulema of the frontier to revolt against the British Government. The secret assignment of Mohammed Hasan shows that he was the most trustworthy among the revolutionaries.[132]

**6. Mohammed Hasan Qiyat of Hyderabad:** He was a comrade of Abdul Rahim for whom the letters were sent. It

would not be wrong to say that because of the delay in reaching to Kabul, the conspiracy of the silk letters was exposed.

7. **Mohammed Hussain:** The inquiry of British Government shows that he was a close associate of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan. Mohammed Hussain used to raise funds for Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan.[133]

8. **Mohammed Ismail Khan Hakim Syed Ajmeri:** The inquiry of British intelligence failed to pinpoint as to why Mohammed Ismail had changed his loyalty. In the beginning, he was very loyal to Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan, but when he was asked to circulate the Ghalib Pasha's address and work for it, he refused to do so.[134]

9. **Mohammed Miyan alias Mansoor Ali:** As Mohammed Miyan alias Mansoor Ali assumed a prominent place in Junud-e-Rabbaniya, the intelligence report throws ample light on his revolutionary character. After graduating from Deoband, he went with Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan to Saudi Arabia and came back with the Ghalib Nama. He succeeded in inciting people into rebellion in both the northern-west frontier and India.

10. **Maulana Mohammed Mubeen Maulvi:** The intelligence inquiry into the silk letters conspiracy also focusses on the role of Maulvi Mohammed Mubeen, who was an ardent follower of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan. He attended various secret meetings at Deoband. He used to collect funds from Randir, Meerut, Delhi and Calcutta.[135]

11. **Maulvi Sadeq of Sindh:** He figured on the list of Junud-e-Rabbaniya as colonel. He spread the mission secretly and played a very significant role in the revolts of 1950 and 1960. He was. arrested at Karnavar.[136]

12. **Mohammed Sehwal Maulvi:** The inquiry shows that teachers as well as higher authorities were involved in the conspiracy. Mohammed Sehwal worked as a senior teacher in Arabiya College of Calcutta. The British Government was suspected his presence in meetings at Deoband and Mecca. He also used to send funds to Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan.[137]

13. **Mohammed Sayeed Maulvi:** About Mohammed Sayeed Maulvi, the British Government had failed to provide

any concrete information. He was arrested only on suspension.[138]

**14. Mohammed Salim:** In the case of Mohammed Salim also, the inquiry report failed to get enough information. He was arrested on the ground of suspension.[139]

**15. Mohammed Tarzi:** He introduced Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi to Prince Inayatullah Khan of Kabul and helped him a lot and was a good friend of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Barkat Ali.[140]

**16. Mohammed Yousuf Maulvi Gangohi:** He was the grandson of Maulana Rashid Gangohi, the religious leader of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan. The inquiry failed to establish whether he was a follower of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan or not.[141]

**17. Munir Bey:** He was a Turkish doctor working as an in-charge in the civil hospital. He also participated in various secret meetings of the revolutionaries.[142]

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# NADWAT-UL-ULEMA MOVEMENT

Towards the end of Nineteenth Century, the political and cultural dominance of the European Civilisation had become an established fact in the sub-continent. The European Civilisation brought in its wake not only the scientific spirit, but also instruments that tended to render the Eastern values and cultural constructs insignificant. Besides, the presence of foreign forces on the sub-continental soil encouraged the missionary effort of the Christians who flocked to the lands of East to "guide the heathen" to a proper path to the God. The work of the missionaries combined with the onslaught of scientific education and promotion of concept of secularism led the Muslims to introspection about the lurking danger to their own civilization and culture. Keeping this in view, some Islamic scholars felt the need for an organisation that would safeguard the faith of Muslims against the onslaught of European culture. Nadwat-ul-Ulema, a product of this line of thinking, was established with the aim of bridging the gulf between the old and the new. It set about bringing Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband and Aligarh Muslim University closer to each other.

In the forefront of the formation of Nadwat-ul-Ulema was Maulana Mohammad Ali Mongeri, who founded it in 1894.[1] He was a strong advocate of bringing together the Islam and modern education.

Mongeri said, "There is a great need of a group of ulema

(Islamic scholars) which should also be in touch with the current affairs and developments. It should know what the rules of governance are and what type of relations it should have with the government. It is said that one main reason, which is gaining ground, of the dwindling influence of ulema in the country, is that they have confined themselves to the comfort of their homes, and don't know anything about the world and the current situation. Their suggestions, therefore, are not worth following."[2]

Against this background, Maulana Mongeri thought it appropriate to start a madrasa, which would impart religious as well as modern scientific education to students. He, therefore, decided to frame a type of syllabus that conformed to the cultural, religious and the scientific needs of the time.

Giving an outline of such a syllabus, he wrote, "These suggestions intend to make our students adhere to their religion in such a manner that they can create an impact on others. Bravery, courage, superiority and broad-mindedness can be created among the students, despite which, in Dar-ul-Uloom where all other things are excellent, Deeni (religious) education particularly that of the all-important Qur'an, cannot be achieved. Excellence should be created so that the infidels (non-believers) can be faced."

Allama Shibli Nomani, who drew a sketch of the Dar-ul-Uloom, Lucknow also emphasised on the need of students attaining excellence in religious education on the one hand, and gaining sufficient control over other subjects by which they can be fully aware of the current situation on the other.[3]

The rector of Nadwat-ul-Ulema, Maulana Syed Muhammad Ali, wrote a joint letter to the assistant rector of Dar-ul-Uloom, Maulana Abdul Hai and teacher, Maulana Abdul Lateef Rehmani, briefing them on the aims and objectives of Dar-ul-Uloom. He laid great stress on four things:[4]

1. Thorough knowledge and understanding of principles of elements, which is very essential for an experienced and successful leader;[5]
2. Farsightedness and broad outlook;[6]

3. Modesty and balance; and,[7]
4. Knowledge of Qur'an and Arabic literature.[8]

The aim behind formation of Nadwat-ul-Ulema was also to iron out differences amongst the ulema and unite them for the cause of Islam. When the teacher of madrasa Islamia, Faizabad, Maulana Mushtaq Ali Nageenavi,[9] was sent on a tour of important places of the country, he was given a letter by the first rector of the Nadwat-ul-Ulema listing its objectives.

"At present, differences among ulema is a cause of a great loss to the community. Ulema have differences on petty issues. Because of this, the image of both the ulema and Islam is being tarnished in the eyes of the people. This body will ensure that no difference or conflict arises and, if at all it does, it will sort it out amicably".

The second convention of Nadwat-ul-Ulema was held at Baradari, Qaisar Baugh, Lucknow, from April 12 to 14 in 1895.[10] Allama Shibli Nomani's speech on 'Duties of Islamic scholars' was very important here. He said, "In the days of Islamic government in the country, reins of both Islamic and prevalent education were in the hands of ulema. Besides teaching about prayers and fasting, ulema used to dispose of legal cases. They used to issue orders and decrees against killings and related matters. Thus, it were the ulema who used to look after both religious and other worldly matters".

Maulana Shibli held that the indifferent attitude of the ulema, their internal squabbles and their aloofness from the common people had reduced their role in the society and kept them confined only to the religious matters. He called upon the religious teachers to fight the trend of dominance of materialistic civilisation and be in touch with common masses.

After the formation of the Dar-ul-Uloom, Lucknow, which in itself was a major achievement of Nawat-ul-Ulema, a convention was held on October 4, 1898.[11] A report was presented on the occasion, which reiterated the four basic objectives of the school i.e., to impart religious and scientific education. This is because only those who have a thorough command on Shariat will be able to issue authentic decrees

binding on followers and to inspire Muslims to adopt Islamic culture and character, besides creating far-sightedness and courage.

In accordance with the above-mentioned objectives, a syllabus was designed in conformity with religious and scientific needs and since then Dar-ul-Uloom has been treading on the same path.[12]

**Achievements**

There is no denying the fact that Dar-ul-Uloom has many commendable contributions to its credit. It had produced many experts both in oratorical and writing skills. It made available many valuable books in Urdu on Islamic culture and literature. The idea of the criticism of the negative aspects of the western culture that it had initiated helped the people gain self-confidence; particularly Islamic history, description of prophet Mohammed's life and character and other publications of Islamic literature are among its noteworthy contributions.

The founders and patrons of the Dar-ul-Uloom, namely Maulana Mohammed Ali Mongeri, Allama Shibli Nomani, Maulana Shirwani, Maulana Syed Abdul Hai etc. were recognised in this subcontinent for their piousness and purity. Allama Nomani and Syed Suleman Nadwi[13] were prolific writers. They established a novel way of writing Urdu prose, which is simply inimitable.

Therefore, Syed Suleman Nadwi while praising Allama Shibli said: "The first lion-hearted person who came forward from the Muslim community was Maulana Shibli, who started paying Orientalists in their own coin".[14]

However, it should be conceded that, Nadwa failed to produce revolutionary persons who could blend the old with the new and work as a link between the Aligarh and the Deoband schools. Besides, its syllabus was not concise. Nor did it conform to the standards of modern scientific education. Therefore, the intended results could not be achieved.

Concerned about this drawback of the school, the Editor of *Al-Baas Al-Islami*,[15] Maulana Muhammad Husna, commented: "Drastic changes in the syllabus

notwithstanding, there is a need for not only effecting revolutionary changes, but also revamping it completely. I gain the impression that syllabus-makers at times tended to avoid realities of the day, which cannot compensate for the defects and sooner or later they will come to the fore."

Nadwa's Golden Jubilee was celebrated by organising a commemorative convention from October 31 to November 3, 1975.[16] On this occasion, several promising students of this institution felt sad because they had thought that in the background of the changing times, efforts would be made to synthesise Islam with modern education in a manner, which the world understands and recognises. Nothing of that sort had, however, happened.

That is why the syllabus still needs modifications. Thus, the decades-old review by Maulana Maudodi regarding the syllabus still holds. He opined: "The benefit that can be availed from this syllabus is that it will be possible to churn out more qualified scholars, who will be able to speak the languages of Germany and America. This change, however, will neither ensure power to ulema, nor make the world accept the leadership of those ulema who lead towards Heaven, and reject those who lead towards the Hell. For this purpose, it is necessary to form a new organisation with the following characteristics":[17]

1. It should end the individual identities of religious and worldly education by merging the two.[18]
2. Instead of burdening students with all the knowledge, concise and faculty-wise system of education should be adopted.[19]
3. Both the teachers and students should have a definite goal before them and there should be sincere efforts and actions to achieve it."[20]

Nadwa-tul-Uloom's slogan of convergence of old and new, however, became popular among Muslims. Hence, in 1909[21] *Madrasa-tul-Asla* was founded in Sara-e-Mir, Azamgarh in U.P., which was developed by Allama Farahi and Maulana Shibli. In this school, special attention was accorded to summary and

understanding of the Qur'an and study of Arabic was done with great interest and passion. Modesty and simple living were its ideals. Tahreek Islami Hind got strength from this school, which produced many able leaders.

Jamiya Dar-us-Salaam, Omerabad,[22] also adopted a similar syllabus and gave the slogan of convergence of new and old education. It is difficult to find such an example in any other southern part of the country, which has to its credit major contribution in promoting a tolerant society. Therefore, Maulana Syed Suleman Nadwi used to call it as Nadwa of South. A school was started in Taj-ul-Masajid in Bhopal, on the lines of Nadwa and now it has become an important center of education in Madhya Pradesh.

Jamiyat-ul-Falah in Balariya Gunj, Amazgarh, also gave the slogan of Nadwa and aimed at producing people with thorough knowledge of the Qur'an and Sunnah, who would look after important issues and would be well versed in matters other than Islamic in nature. Jamiyat-ul-Falah has been successful to a certain extent in its aims. Its certificate of Alimiyat is recognised as equivalent to that of the Board of Intermediate Education. Its students are the torchbearers of Islamic movement and its old students used to publish a monthly magazine calleld, *Hayat-e-Nav*, which was their major contribution.

Thus, different schools followed Nadawt-ul-Uloom. Some schools helped it, some accepted it as a pioneer and some adopted its syllabus with some modifications and alterations. Some schools designed their own syllabi keeping in mind Nadwa's main objectives before them.

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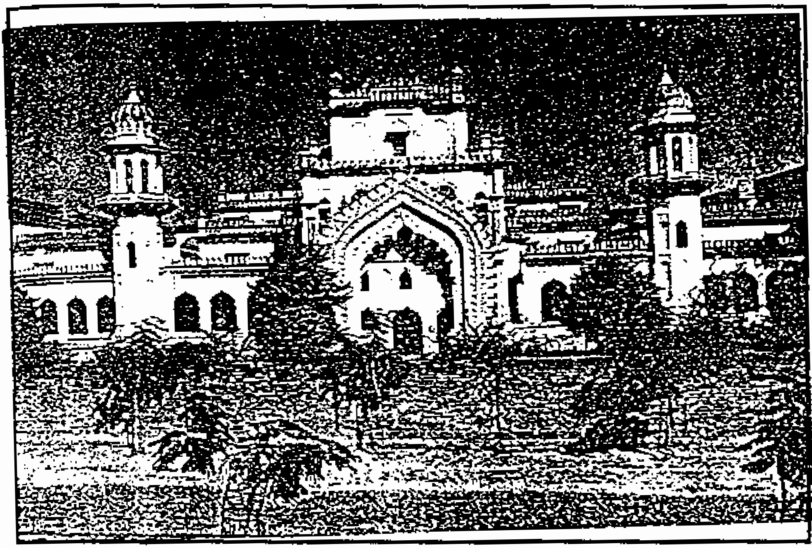
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9. *Ibid.*, pp. 236-237.
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11. *Ibid.*, p. 237.
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16. *Ibid.*, p. 239.
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# SHAIKH-UL-HIND MAULANA MEHMOOD-UL-HASAN AND HIS DISCIPLES

Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband, came into being after the unsuccessful first war of Independence (The Sepoy Mutiny 1857) with the aim of instilling a sense of confidence among Muslims, especially against the backdrop of official discrimination against them. The Sepoy Mutiny was an armed conflict and its failure created the need for introspection and redefinition of values, which Dar-ul-Uloom attempted to provide.

The founders of Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband, namely Hazrat Maulana Mohammad Qasim Nanawtawi, Haji Imdadullah and Rashid Ahmed Gangohi, dreamed of imparting pure Islamic education to youths for countering western education and culture, besides preparing them for the struggle against the British rulers. Their dream came true when revolutionary ulema like Mehmood-ul-Hasan, Obaidullah Sindhi, Husain Ahmed Madani, to name a few, emerged on the scene. Of these ulema, Mehmood-ul-Hasan played a pivotal role in the freedom struggle. All the revolutionary activities of the ulema revolved around him.

Mehmood-ul-Hasan was born in the year 1851 at Bareli, Uttar Pradesh in a family with a scholarly background.[1] He was popularly known as Shaikh-ul-Hind. He earned this title from the Central Khilafat Committee.[2] His father was



The main building of Nadwah.

*Courtesy*: Metcalf Barbara Daly, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey.

Mohammad Zulfequar Ali. In accordance with the tradition and practice prevailing in the family down the order, Mehmood-ul-Hasan was given theological education. He was adorned with this kind of education by Maulana Mongeri, followed by Maulana Abdul Lateef and Maulana Mehtab Ali.[3]

The entire focus of Mehmood-ul-Hasan was centred around the education for self as well as for others. He maintained this struggle throughout his life in an effort to achieve his mission. He was closely associated with Deoband for major part of his life as a student and as a teacher. During the course of his school days, he was a favourite student of Nanawtawi.[4] As a teacher his name and fame spread to every nook and corner of India. His teachings on nationalism and patriotism contributed in a big way to the freedom struggle of India.

From early childhood Mehmood-ul-Hasan had a very bitter experience of the British tyranny. He was with his father in the Mutiny of 1857 at Meerut.[5] He was then just a child of seven years. He observed how the Indians had become victims of the British, who had succeeded in establishing their central power over India. After the Mutiny, the British targetted Muslims because British thought that the Mutiny was the handiwork of the Muslims. Consequently, British chose to punish them by depriving them of the benfits like appointment in government job and so on. Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan could hardly tolerate the excruciating circumstances under which the Muslims were living and he vowed to oppose British imperalism tooth and nail.

After completing his education at Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband, Mehmood-ul-Hasan joined his alma mater as a teacher in 1890 and served till 1915.[6] Mohammed Zulfequar Hussain, father of Mehmood-ul-Hasan, was a highly educated person. From the very beginning he was attached to Deoband as a member of *Majlis-e-Shoora* (Council of Advisors).

At Deoband, Mehmood-ul-Hasan met his master and

crossed the boundary of teaching and learning and involved in revolutionary activities.

Though Nanawtawi had a very short span of life, he was able to lay the foundation of Deoband. The company of Mehmood-ul-Hasan with Nanawtawi in itself was a revolution. The revolutionary character of Mehmood-ul-Hasan started from here.

He had mastery over Persian, Arabic and various other languages.[7] Equal zeal for the revolution and education went into the making of Maulana's personality and finally led to foundation of Jamiat-ul-Ansar under Samrat-ul-Tarbiat and the 'Reshmi Rumal Movement.' Mehmood-ul-Hasan's ambition was to liberate India for which he received guidance from Nanawtawi.

## Jamiat-ul-Ansar

It would not be wrong to say that Jamiat-ul-Ansar was the first serious revolutionary attempt after the Mutiny of 1857. It was indeed a very bold step of Deoband. It started raising voice against imperialism at a time, when any type of political activity could become a cause of imprisonment or death sentence. The founding of Jamiat-ul-Ansar coincided with high noon of the British supremacy. It was a period when the British had intentions of inflicting punishment on Muslims for their participation in the Mutiny. Another aspect of the British policy of that period was to support the people from other communities. One of the achievments of the Britishers was to divide the people of the land. They managed to do this with the Indians also, partly because the Indians lacked a sense of nationalism and partly because they were already at loggerheads with each other. Consequently, when the British made their hatred for Muslims public, a group of Hindus began to curry favour with the white masters to prove their loyalty. And, Muslims did the same when the British marginalised the Hindus for their revolutionary attitude as happened later towards the beginning of the 20th Century.

دارلعلوم میں مدرس کی حیثیت سے تقرر کو پانچ سال ہوئے تھے کہ ۱۲۹۷ھ (۱۸۷۸ء) میں آپ
نے درالعلوم ہی کے حلقہ میں ایک جماعت بنائی ''ثمرۃ الربیت'' اس کا نام تجویز کیا۔ (یعنی تربیت
کا پھل) درالعلوم کے مالی مفاد کے لئے فضلاء اور ہمدردان دارلعلوم سے رابطہ رکھنا اس جماعت کا
[9] مقصد ظاہر کیا گیا۔ مگر ظاہر ہے کہ جملہ مقاصد کو الفاظ کا جامہ نہیں پہنایا جاتا۔ سامراج جوان تھا۔
اس کا سی۔آئی۔ڈی ماہر فن سرکار کا پکا وفادار 'انٹیلیجنس' چاق و بندت تھا۔

(After five years of his appointment as teacher in Dar-ul-Uloom, he (Mehmood-ul-Hasan) formed a body in 1878 (1297 Hijri) and suggested its name as Samrat-ul-Tarbiat (fruits of training). Its aim was to established contacts with the elite groups and supporters of Dar-ul-Uloom for its economic needs. But, it is obvious that all aims could not be enumerated in words as the British Government was in full bloom and its CID and intelligence was both very loyal and alert).

Samrat-ul-Tarbiat was an organisation of the donors of the Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband. Because of the British intelligence, its work was conducted in a very confidential manner.

Samrat-ul-Tarbiat proved very successful for Mehmood-ul-Hasan's ultimate aim of taking revenge of the Mutiny. According to Maulana Mohammed Miyan, the work of this organisation started with the first batch of Deoband. He said, "This batch consisted of students who were in this work in their respective areas." This statement indicates that the revolutionary movement was in operation since fifty years.[10]

Before going into details of Samrat-ul-Tarbiat, which was later renamed as Jamiat-ul-Ansar, it is necessary to discuss the political situation prevalent at the time of its establishment. We found that there was not a single organisation of a

not an easy task. Britishers were in no way inclined to own any type of responsibility for Indian problems. In order to please Indian subedars, jagirdars, etc. they followed a policy of granting titles. Their intention behind this policy was to turn a Nelson's eye towards Indian problems and pay more attention towards siphoning off the wealth from India to strengthen British economy.

The Congress Party was established in the year 1885 with the blessing of Lord Dufrind and the efforts of A.O. Hume. It wanted to gain the confidence of the British Government initially to address problems of the Indians. It also acted as a link between the rural and urban masses. The British Government was fully aware that if the frustration of young educated Indians was not channelised in a proper way, it would prove harmful to its interest. Apart from Congress, no political party was allowed. Under such difficult circumstances, the formation of Samrat-ul-Tarbiat was a step of extraordinary courage.

*Jamiat-ul-Ansar* emerged on the scene in 1909.[11] Actually, it was the same old Samrat-ul- Tarbiat, which was in operation for 30 years, to be precise since 1878. Some were of the opinion that Jamiat-ul-Ansar was an association of 'old people.' It was condemned by Maulana Husain Ahmed Amrohi in a speech, which he delivered on the occasion of the first conference of Jamiat-ul-Ansar.

بعض نئی روشنی کے شیدائی کہتے ہے۔ جمعیۃ الانصار ''اولڈ بوائز ایسوی ایشن'' کی نقل ہے لیکن یہ
بات ہرگز صحیح نہیں ہے۔ جمعیۃ الانصاری کی تحریک غالباً اب سے تیس برس پہلے شروع ہوگئی تھی۔ اور
اس تحریک کے بانی مدرسہ عالیہ کے وہ طالب علم تھے جو آج علوم کے سرچشمہ اور آفتاب فنون ہیں۔
اور جن کی ذاتی بابرکات پر آج زمانہ جس قدر ناز کرے کم ہے۔ لیکن یہ تحریک اس وقت ضروریات

ہے۔ ۱۳۲۷ھ (۱۹۰۹ء) سے اس انجمن کو دوبارہ زندہ کرکے جمعیۃ الانصار نام رکھا گیا۔ جمعیۃ
12 الانصار ہرگز کسی کی نقل نہیں ہے۔ اور نہ کسی کے ذاتی مقاصد سے بحیثیت بنیادی اس کا تعلق ہے بلکہ
اس کے مقاصد وہ ضروری مقاصد ہیں۔ جن کی آج بہت ضرورت ہے۔

"Some people with modern outlook say that Jamiat-ul-Ansar is a copy of the Old Boys Association. But this is not true. The movement of Jamiat-ul-Ansar was started 30 years ago and its founder was one of the students of this school, who is now a fountain of education and today, the more society expresses thanks for his personal impact the less it is. But, this organisation was not related to the needs of that time and thus stopped. But, as the maxim goes, necessity gives birth to everything; the organisation was revived and re-christined as Jamait-ul-Ansar in 1909 (1327 Hijri). Jamait-ul-Ansar is neither a copy of any other organisation, nor its aims are personal, but it has those aims which are the need of the hour).[13]

Thus, the statement Maulana Hussain Ahmed Amrohi proves that it was Samrat-ut-Tarbiat that was later re-organised and introduced with a new identity of Jamait-ul-Ansar.

Again, Maulana Syed Mohammed Miyan in *"Asirane Malta,"* says:

تحریک اس وقت ضروریات سے متعلق نہیں تھی اس لئے رک گئی۔ یہ رکنا صرف ہندوستان کی حد تک تھا
۔ مگر مغربی شمالی سرحد کے قبائل میں اس کا سلسلہ برابر جاری رہا۔ البتہ یہ پارٹی یا جماعت کی شکل میں نہیں
19 تھا۔ بلکہ افراد کے ذہنوں میں جذبہ انقلاب پیدا کرنا۔ اور اس کی تربیت اس کا پروگرام تھا جو شاگردی یا
ارادتمندی کی صورت میں جاری رہا۔ یہ شیخ الہند حضرت مولانا محمود حسن رحمہ اللہ کا کارنامہ تھا۔

(The organisation stopped its work because it was not related to the needs. Its suspension was limited to India only and it was very much in the North West Frontier. Though it had no formal shape of an organisation or party, its plan was to stimulate feelings of revolt among people. Its scheme was to train students and followers, which was on. This was one

of the major achievements of Hazrat Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan).

Mehmood-ul-Hasan re-organised Jamiat-ul-Ansar and sent Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi to Kabul. Kabul had assumed great importance from the days of Quddus Syed Ahmed. The rapport between Kabul and India was to help each other against the British Government. The rapport was also developed during the time of Mehmood-ul-Hasan, who with the help of his most trusted pupil, Obaidullah Sindhi, carried forward on the mission.[15]

Obaidullah Sindhi said:

کابل جاکر مجھے معلوم ہوا کہ حضرت شیخ الہند رحمہ اللہ جس جماعت کے نمائندہ تھے اس کی پچاس سال کی
محنتوں کے حاصل میرے سامنے غیر منظم شکل میں تعمیل حکم کے لئے تیار ہیں۔ اُن کو میرے جیسے خادم شیخ
الہند کی ضرورت تھی۔[16]

(After going to Kabul, I learned that work of the past 50 years by that organisation, whose member was Hazrat Shaikh-ul-Hind, was in a disorganised condition and it was waiting for my orders. They were in need of followers of Shaikh-ul-Hind like me).[17]

From this statement it becomes very clear that Jamiat-ul-Ansar was basically a revolutionary organisation and its existence can be traced back to the days of Quddus Syed Ahmed.[18] But earlier its name was Samrat-ul-Tarbiat and Quddus Syed Ahmed was the official in-charge of its work in the North-West Frontier Province.

In 1910, Mehmood-ul-Hasan organised the famous Jalsa-e-Dastarbandi (Convocation). This programme was attended by around 30,000 Muslims. It assumed great significance because for the first time two Muslim institutions the Aligarh and Deoband came together. The former group was led by Sahibzada Aftab Khan (son of Sir Sayyed Ahmed Khan) and the latter by Mehmood-ul-Hasan.[19]

A consensus on bridging the gap between Deoband and Aligarh was reached at, by exchanging students. But unfortunately, the proposal did not materialise because the

Deobandis found that the first batch of Aligarh that consisted of two students was nothing but a secret agency working for the British Government. If the practice of exchange had continued then, as Zia-ul-Hasan Farooqui[20] had said, it could have made history in the political and intellectual lives of the Indians. After considering evidence and incidence, we may say that Jamait-ul-Ansar was an attempt of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan to start a movement against the British tyranny. Jamiat-ul-Ansar worked as a platform, from which revolutionary activities were carried on not only in India, but also in the North-West Frontier.

The new magazine 'Rasheed'[21] was started within two years of the establishment of Jamiat-ul-Ansar. Maulana Mohammed Miyan Asgar Husain was one of the most trusted students of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan, who had entrusted him with the responsibility of this magazine. The letter, which was written by Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan to Miyan Azgar Hussain,[22] tried to convince him to take over the responsibility of 'Rasheed.' The contents of the letter show that the revolutionary movement was not going ahead merely on account of the establishment of the organisation, but also for creation of awareness and building of minds of the common masses through the medium of press. Though in the letter the aim of the publication was not mentioned very clearly, the background and activities of the letter was indicative that 'Rasheed,' had rendered this great job which was carried out by Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan with the help of his pupils.

**Nazarat-ul-Maroof**

Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan formed an academy for learning the Qur'an known as *Nazarat-ul-Maroof*. No doubt, the Britishers had come to India with the sole purpose of trade and commerce, but they gradually indulged in spreading Christianity. In order to fulfil their aim, a number of missionaries were set up. As a result, the Indians slowly drifted away from their own culture. It was not possible for them to remain mute spectators to the changes.[23]

About the aim of Nazarat-ul-Maroof, Maulana Hussain

Ahmed Madani says: "Its main objective was to instruct the western educated Muslim youths to shape and mould their lives in accordance with the teaching of the Qur'an and Sunnat and abolish all forms of ill practices and evil deeds in their day-to-day doings."[24]

One of the reports of British intelligence threw ample light on the formation of Nazarat-ul-Maroof, "When Obaidullah Sindhi had failed to carry out revolutionary activity in Deoband, then Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi had moved towards Delhi with the same object."[25]

Although the Nazarat-ul-Maroof had been established for achieving the above aim, it had also worked as a revolutionary organisation. Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan sent Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi to Delhi.

Many students of the Aligarh Muslim University and renowned pupils of Anees Ahmed joined Nazarat-ul-Maroof. Anees Ahmed also pursuaded his father, Maulvi Idris Ahmed, join this academy.

The Nazarat-ul-Maroof achieved national fame. It was receiving the aid of Rs 200 from the Begum of Bhopal.[26] Apart from imparting religious education, it had also succeeded in seeking the co-operation of the ruling class. Some national and international events, which played significant role in development of nationalism, were that of Balqhaan problem and the demolition of Masjid-e-Kanpur, etc. The above had worked like adding fuel to the fire.[27]

In Delhi, Abdul Kalam Azad and Maulana Mohammed Ali frequently paid visits to Nazarat-ul-Maroof wih Obaidullah Sindhi acting as their coordinator. In short, Nazart-ul-Maroof bacame an important political centre for the Muslim nationalists and consequently it proved the farsightedness of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan.[28]

From the above discussion, it is clear that Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan had established an organization Samrat-ul- Tarbiat, which was later known as Nazarat-ul-Maroof. The aim of Nazarat-ul-Maroof was to carry on the revolutionary programme and it was housed in a rented building that Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan had arranged. The revolutionary

activities of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan started when neither the Muslim League nor Hindu Mahasabha were in existence. Jamiat-ul-Ansar had continued this work for which Nazarat-ul-Maroof had worked in Delhi. The ulema were of the opinion that because of Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi's revolutionary activities, the interest of Dar-ul-Uloom was likely to receive a major setback. Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan shifted Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi from Deoband to Delhi. This was the best solution without harming Deoband and also to carry on the revolutionary movement uninterrupted.[29]

Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan's freedom movement had two vital aspects. The first aspect was to organize mercenaries and freedom fighters and to build a strong military base in Muslim tribal areas, while the second aspect was to attack Britishers with the help of other countries. The freedom fighters and the mercenaries were assigned to campaign against the Britishers and disrupt their government. Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi was the General of this army. Procurement of arms and ammunition was a very important task. However, this was not an easy job. Seeking help from Afghanistan, Turkistan, and Iran as well as other Islamic countries was also a great challenge.[30] Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan took up this responsibility on his shoulders and undertook pilgrimage to Mecca. He was confident of succeeding in his mission.

**Mehmood-ul-Hasan's Aim**

Up to this time, it became very clear that Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan had only one aim i.e. to overthrow the British rule. This was the dream of Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi, which was about to be completed by Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan. He was in search of motivated revolutionaries and Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi was such a revolutionary. Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi was full of revenge and ambitions. Waging a war against the Britishers was the ultimate solution. Many revolutionary centres were set up in Delhi, Deoband, Dinpur Sharif, Amrot Sharif, Khadd (Karachi), Chikwal and Bengal.[31]

As compared to above centres, Yaghistan was the most advanced in terms of the execution of revolutionary

programmes, because the people of Yaghistan were bold, courageous and never accepted the British rule. Unfortunately, they were not organised and, therefore, their strength was scattered.[32]

Apart from Maulana Obaidulah Sindhi, the other prominent members who moved to Yaghistan were Maulana Saif-ur-Rahman, Maulana Mohammed Miyan, Maulana Fazal Rabi, Haji Tanag Zai and Maulana Sami.[33] These revolutionaries carried out the revolutionary programme. In India this great task was carried out by the following revolutionaries: Abdul Rahman, Raipuri, Maulana Khalil Ahmed, Maulana Khalid Ahmed, Maulana Mohammed Ahmed Chakwal, Maulana Mohammed Sadiq, Shaikh Abdul Rahim Sindhi, Maulana Abdul Rahim, Maulana Gulam Mohammed Dinpuri, Maulana Taj Mehmood, Dr. Muqtar Ansari and Hakim Abdul Razzak Ansari.[34]

As Dar-ul-Uloom was run independent of any government funds, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad made efforts to raise funds and the main contribution came from Haji Seth Abdullah.[35] In Yaghistan, the situation was completely in favour of the Afghans. Despite the surveillance of British, the revolutionaries continued to carry out their activities. The people were bold and courageous and were fighting the war undaunted. They were experts in guerrilla warfare. The battle was turning in favour of Yaghistanis. However, the British policy of divide and rule did the trick. By taking the advantage of international upheavals, they declared the fight as 'hasam' for it was being fought without the consent of the King Habibullah Khan. This proved to be a dangerous weapon. In this conspiracy, they took the support of Afghan Sardars. With this the force, which was engaged in fierce battle, got disturbed and lost its control.[36]

**Journey to Mecca**

As the news of deterioration of situation in Yaghistani army in the battlefield reached Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan, he became anxious to go to Yaghistan, because it was the time when there was a great need for central guidance.

But the British forces proved to be a great hurdle in his way.

The urgent problem before Maulana was to tackle the dangerous situation. On one hand, there was a highly alert British force and on the other hand, there was a persistent demand for arms and ammunition and other supplies in Yaghistan, owing to a cut down in supply of magazines to the revolutionary forces.[37]

As the 'fatwa' (religious edict) of Sharif Hussain was not signed by Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan, it alarmed the British Government. The British Government had planned to arrest Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan. When the news was conveyed to Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan by Mukhtar Ahmed, a controversy erupted in the group. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari[38] insisted that Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan should get away from the Indian border as early as possible, whereas Maulana Abul Kalam Azad[39] was of the opinion that Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan should not go to Arabia. Instead, he was expected to carry on the revolutionary activities in India. But it was the time when there was a great need for Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan to go to Yaghistan. Therefore, Maulana undertook the journey for Mecca. The drama from Deoband to Mecca was very interesting. The British failed to arrest Maulana at Deoband because they were afraid of the masses. The arrest of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan at this stage could have invited another danger to the British Government. Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan learned about his imminent arrest when he reached Bombay. In Bombay, Maulana Anjuman-e-Mahafizan-e-Hajj was reserved by Kashim Abdul Razzaque.[40] The spread of news of Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan journey to Mecca witnessed the gathering of mob in front of the place of his stay. Finally, he left for Mecca on September 18, 1915.[41]

The British Government informed the Governor of Aden to arrest Mehmood-ul-Hasan, but their attempt proved futile as the messengers were the men of Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari, who deliberately delayed the telegram. Then the British Government planned to arrest of him from the ship, but the

plan didn't materialise. Maulana safely reached Mecca on October 9, 1915.[42]

After the completion of his pilgrimage, Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan met the governor of Mecca, Ghalib Pasha. With the mediation of Hafiz Abdul Jabbar, who was a native of Delhi, Maulana requested Ghalib Pasha to extend his help. He was assured of the help after a preliminary inquiry. Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan made a request to Ghalib Pasha for sending a special message to the Indian Muslims to involve them in the freedom struggle.[43]

Ghalib Pasha, the Governor of Mecca, accepted the plea of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan and issued a message to the Indian Muslims. The contents of the letter are as follows:

> "Dear Muslims, you are living under the tyranny of the Britishers. The rule of the Britishers is on the verge of doom. I pray to Allah to free you people from the slavery of the Britishers. Organise, maintain unity and gather all resources that are needed for the success of your movement. Don't be afraid but stand firmly and courageously. Break the shackles of slavery through the strength of unity and attain right of freedom. It is your fundamental right. Push your enemy into the valley of death. You must know that Maulana Mehmood-ul- Hasan came to us and we assured him of our help. If he comes to you, I ask you to trust him and offer him every kind of help, including money and manpower."[44]

Likewise, he also sent letters to the Governor of Madina, Defence Minister of Turkey (Anwar Pasha) and Governor of Shaam (Jamal Pasha).

The major error in the message, given by Ghalib Pasha was that, it was directed only at the Muslims asking them to get liberated. India being a multi-cultural and multi-religious country, the letter should have been addressed in the name of all Indians, as every person from this country was part and parcel of the freedom struggle.

After attaining great success in Mecca, Mehmood-ul-Hasan decided to call on the Defence Minister of Turkey. The Defence Minister of Turkey, Anwar Pasha too was in Mecca for holy pilgrimage. He had delegated his powers to Jamal Pasha with whom Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan held talks. Maulana

Mehmood-ul-Hasan gave in brief information about the British tyranny to Jamal Pasha and requested him to extend help. He explained that help from Turkey would create massive zeal in the hearts of Indian freedom fighters.[45]

Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan, thus, left no stone unturned to enlist support for India's freedom struggle. He would have, in fact, led a luxurious life. However, by denouncing all comforts, he put himself up for the great cause of the country's freedom.

Jamal Pasha could not turn down the request of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan and agreed to issue a message. On the 4th day after the meeting, Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan was given letters by the Ministry of Defence, Turkey. These three letters were written in Turkish, Arabic, and Persian languages. The contents were same, but only the languages were different. Anwar Pasha and Jamal Pasha had supported the Indian freedom movement as well as expressed full sympathy with the Indians. The people living in Turkey were instructed to trust the words of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan and extend him the necessary co-operation.[46]

**The Journey of Letters to India**

It was believed by both the CID and masses that Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan would return to India.[47] The CID had remained alert on the harbour.

A large number of supporters of Mehmood-ul-Hasan was also reached there to welcome him. As soon as he alighted from the ship along with Maulana Hadi Hussain and other associate, one of the supporters asked Hadi Hussain if he needed any help. Hadi immediately handed over an wooden box to him.[48] After some time Maulana Hadi Hussain was arrested along with Maulana Khalid Ahmed. They were searched out strictly even the walking stick[49] was broken down but nothing doubtful was found. These arrested persons were sent to Nainital under the custody of police.

Hussain was withheld. He was interrogated strictly, but he did not reveal the secret. When nothing came out even after temptation and hardships, he was also released from the jail after one and a half months.[50]

Maulana Mohammed Nabi, who was also associated with this movement, learned from a secret source that these letters were hidden in the wooden box. After breaking the box, three copies of letters were found. In this way, the letters were found at Khan Jahanpur by Maulana Mohammed Nabi.[51]

The police learned about these letters after one and a half months[52] from the statement of an unknown person that the letters had come from Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan hidden in a wooden box. With the spread of this news, the police begun the search for these letters. They also searched the house of Maulana Hadi Hasan for over six hours, but could not find the letters. Later, the British government got a tip-off that these letters were in the house of Haji Ahmed Mirza, a photographer in Delhi. The police then raided the shop of Haji Mirza twice, but failed to trace the letters.[54] Photo copies of the letters were circulated according to the plan of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan . Obaidullah Sindhi in his personal diary[55] states that at that time he was in Kabul and he learned that the letters were burnt, but the news was was true.

## Setback to Mehmood-ul-Hasan

Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi wrote letters to Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan on three pieces of silk cloth from Kabul. But unfortunately the letters, instead of reaching Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan, fell into the hands of British. This episode later came to be known as the *Reshmi Rumal Conspiracy*. It was a great setback to Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan. The government machinery, which was already keeping a strict vigil on the activities of Mehmood-ul-Hasan, then launched a manhunt to nab him with the support of Sharif Hussain, the Governor of Mecca. Mohammed Miyan in *Tahrik-e-Shaikh-ul-*

When the deceiving point of Mr. Wilson came forward suddenly the circumstances changed. The victory of yesterday became the defeat of today."[56]

When the American army came to help the English and French with a large number of arms, Sharif Hussain left no stone unturn to crush the Arab army comprising Turks. The Arab army, therefore, had to face defeat at every stage.

After getting letters, Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan planned to reach, as early as possible to the centre of revolution.[57] He planned to go to Yaghistan through Iran. However, in view of possible danger from the Russain and British armies, Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan decided to travel under disguise via Baluchistan, instead of Bombay. He wanted to go to Afganistan from that harbour.

At the same time, he realised that there was a need for a last meeting with Ghalib Pasha and reached Mecca and from Mecca to Tayef. He started for Tayef on 20th Rajjab and reached on 23rd or 24th Rajjab.[58] Some decisions were taken at this meeting and Ghalib Pasha assured him about the next meeting. In the meantime, Sharif Hussain became hostile and surrounded Tayef. Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan once again conducted a meeting with Ghalib Pasha. Though the aim of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan had not been achieved even in this meeting because Ghalib Pasha had advised Maulana to go to India from Mecca and convince the public about accepting complete independence, instead of a dominion state. Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan reached Mecca after one and a half months on 10th Shawwal. Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan after completion of his second Haj in 1313 Hijri, was anxious to reach Yaghistan as soon as possible. He said, "Our stay in Mecca is not favourable because the British Government is dead against us and Sharif Hussain is a tool of the British Government and under these circumstances, there is no hope of any better result."[59]

Maulana was aware of the danger and wanted to leave Mecca and reach Yaghistan. The next hurdle was a memorandum that was presented before him to sign. As the memorandum had supported Sharif Hussain and was against

the Khilafat, Mehmood-ul-Hasan denied to sign it saying, "I am Indian, so I will not sign the same."[60] After few days Sharif Hussain went to Jeddah and sent an order to arrest Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan, along with his colleagues, Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani and Hakim Nusrat.[61] All the arrested persons were sent to a Swiss city in jeep. They were dumped in a jail at Jeeza . They were interrogated. Thereafter, they were shifted to Malta on 16th February 1917.[62] If Sharif Hussain had helped Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan at that time, the Indian freedom movement would have achieved a great success.

**Imprisonment at Malta**

Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan and his associates were in Malta jail for three years and two months. They were released from the jail and reached Bombay on 8th June 1920.[63] Mehmood-ul-Hasan was given a warm welcome. A huge mob had gathered to receive him. The mob comprised many renowned personalities and ulema, revolutionaries etc. This period was eventful as it witnessed the passage of the Rowlatt Act, Jalianwala Bagh massacre and the Non-cooperation Movement. After undergoing rigorous imprisonment of Malta, Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan emerged on the Indian political scene with more enthusiasm and spirit although his health by that time had begun to deteriorate. He supported Gandhi, Mohammed Ali and Shaukat Ali, who welcomed him in Bombay. He advocated non-violence of Gandhi and supported it by signing a religious edict i.e., fatwa, which was popularly known as *fatwa* on non-cooperation, issued on July 15, 1920.[64] This fatwa strengthened the confidence of the Muslims and it was signed by five hundred ulema. It dealt with the following:

1. Denouncing all degrees, awards and appreciation accorded by the British Government. People should boycott Regional Law Boards and abstain from voting.[65]

2. To boycott all British goods and ensure that benefit does not go to the British traders and businessmen.[66]
3. To boycott all schools and colleges run and controlled by the Britishers and refuse their aid and grants.[67]
4. To boycott recruitment drives in British Army and not to extend any sort of help to them.[68]
5. To boycott all the British Courts.[69]

The fatwa sparked anger and hatred against the British Government. Appeals were made to the parents not to send their wards to the government schools and colleges. Maulana had given instructions to the students of Madasar-tul-Uloom of Aligarh regarding the Non-cooperation. He asked them to follow these instructions strictly. Maulana urged people including students, teachers, parents to make every effort for the success of the Non-cooperation Movement. This fatwa proved a death knell to the British government. Another important aspect of this fatwa was its appeal to adopt non-violent to methods.[70]

**Muslim National University**

The fatwa of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan infused a new zeal among the students of the Aligarh Muslim University. They boycotted the Aligarh University and decided to establish a new university under the name of "Muslim National University" and requested Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan to preside over its first conference on October 29, 1920.[71] He was down with chronic tuberculosis. His health deteriorated so much that he was even unable to stretch himself. His attendants wanted to stop him from going to Aligarh, but he said, "If my presidency hurts the British, I will definitely attend the conference."

So he was taken to Deoband railway station in a *Palki* (palanquin).[72]

Though he reached the conference venue, he couldn't address the gathering. His presidential address was read out by Maulana Shabbir Ahmed Osmani. Some part of his memorable address is mentioned below:

"I decided to accept your invitation even in such a weak

health, because I am hopeful to get back my lost hope here. There are many pious people around, but when they are told to rise up and save their society from infidels, they are gripped by fear, not of Allah, but that of some bad people armed with weapons.

When I observed that my sympathisers are more in schools and colleges than in 'madrasas' and 'khangahs,' some of my associates and I took a step towards Aligarh. And as such, we brought together the two historic places—Deoband and Aligarh.

You people know that my elders never issued 'fatwa' (decree) against learning any new or foreign language and technology. But undoubtedly they had said that English education, as it is generally seen, would either drench you in the colours of infidels or prompt you to make fool of your religion and its followers or worship the present government. It is, therefore, better to remain ignorant than to impart such education.[73]

It is, however, true, that our leaders have realised about the great need of our society. Undoubtedly, those institutes, where our students get higher and modern education, but remain unaware of their religious and national duties, are nothing but instruments which make you weak. Therefore, it has been announced that a separate university will be set up on Islamic and national lines. It will be completely free from the influence and control of the government.

**Efforts of Mehmood-ul-Hasan**

Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan during his presidential speech in the 2nd conference of Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind[74] threw light on all burning issues. He underlined the need of Hindu-Muslim unity. He said that Hindus had given full support to the Khilafat Movement. They fought against the Britishers. Meetings, processions, and special sessions were held for the success of that movement.

Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan by reminding these facts in his speech, also emphasised on the principle of non-violence. He said that in any struggle or movement the Indian brethren

should come together irrespective of caste, creed, and religion. The Hindus and Muslims being the major communities of the country must come together. They must always maintain unity, integrity, love, and affection. The issue of Khilafat was related to Muslims only. However, the Hindu brethren also supported it without any selfish motives.

This is an example of high morality of our Hindu brethren. Both the communities had been facing an identical situation since the beginning. To defeat them (Britishers), our religion should not become an obstacle. Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan further said that, the success of the freedom movement depended largely on the unity of the Hindus and Muslims. He cautioned the people not to be friendly and cordial with the Britishers, because they would gain more strength, if we showed any sympathy to them even by a mistake.

Further emphasising his point, Mehmood-ul-Hasan said: "You should know if the contrary conditions prevail, they will make the freedom of India unattainable for all time to come. Therefore, if the three Indian communities, including Sikhs, live in friendship and peace, then I cannot understand how a fourth community, how strong it may be, can defeat the common ideals of the Indians by its violence and despotic rule."[75]

Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan persistently tried to keep the people together. He touched very emotional issues by saying that if Hindus do not drink water with a glass of Muslims or if Muslims do not hold pier of a Hindu on his shoulder, it does not matter much. These were the concluding remarks of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan.

Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan died on 20th November 1920, just one week after the second conference of Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind and he was laid to rest in the graveyard of Deoband.

also, so that Deeni (religious) education could spread for ar wide and these institutes could become useful against th Britishers.

He established many revolutionary centres within an outside the country. In addition to Delhi, he also set up uni of Razakars at many places, including Randeer, Panipa Lahore, Reenpur, Amrot, Karachi, Atman Zai, Tarang Zai etc appointed their heads and asked them to be ready so tha revolt could be made against the British Government at a opportune situation.

However, he had to migrate to Hijaz because of the risin spying and it became very difficult for him to carry on hi activities. In Hijaz, he met the Governor Ghalib Pasha an sought his help in liberating India. Ghalib Pasha readily agree to extend his help.

Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi was on the same mission t Kabul. He too succeeded in getting a positive response fror the Afghan king, Habibullah Khan, who gave permission fo attack by Turkey, on certain conditions. It is worthwhile t note here that, some parts of Afghanistan were under th British rule. Thus, the common enemies of both India an Afghanistan were the Britishers. Afghanistan expressed it readiness to wage a war against the Britishers provide enough arms and ammunition from Turkey were given Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi wrote to Mehmood-ul-Hasa informing him, among other things, about the Afghan king' conditions for waging a war against the enemie Unfortunately, the letters didn't reach the intended destinatio and instead fell into the hands of British officials. The whol plan was exposed. As the letters were written on three sil kerchiefs, the plan became famous as the Reshmi Rumal (Silke Letters) Conspiracy.

Owing to the revelation of the secret letters, the pla couldn't be implemented. February 19, 1917 was fixed fo the rebellion, but before that the British Governmen

was also arrested from Madina. Subsequently, the revolutionary leaders, including Maulana Husain Ahmed Madani, Maulvi Aziz Gul, Hakeem Nusrat Husain were imprisoned in Malta.

Shaikh-ul-Hind Mehmood-ul-Hasan bid adieu to this world on November 30, 1920.[76] When he was given the last bath, people saw that his back had turned black and had many scars. The reason was obvious. He was imprisoned for more than three years and very harsh treatment was meted out to him in the jail. The jailers used to beat him black and blue. He had also advised his companions in Jail not to disclose this fact in public. He chose to suffer untold miseries and torture both mentally and physically alone.

He never disclosed it before anybody and also advised his near and dear ones not to disclose about the scars on his body. It was only after his death that people came to know about the harsh punishment. He was true son of the soil, indeed.

Though the silken letters was part of the long-drawn plan by Mehmood-ul-Hasan, it was made possible by the sincere efforts of Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi. Besides, there were a large number of students and revolutionaries who assisted the duo. Prominent among them were: Haji Sahab Tarang Zai, Mullah Sahab Sundeck, Maulana Muhammad Miyan alias Manor Ansari, Maulana Fazal Rabbi. Maulana Fazal Mehmood, Maulana Muhammad Akbar, Maulana Abdul Rahim Raipuri. Maulana Khaled Ahmed Sahab. Maulana Muhammad Ahmed Chakowali. Maulana Muhammad Sadiq. Shaikh Abdul Rahim Sindhi. Maulana Muhammad Ibrahim Randeeri, Maulana Ghulam Mohiuddin, Maulana Taj Mehmood, Or Muqtar Ahmed Ansari, and Hakeem Abdul Razzakh Ansari.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar, Hakeem Ajmal Khan, Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, etc., also extended help to Mehmood-ul-Hasan in his mission.

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# MAULANA OBAIDULLAH SINDHI

Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi is the most prominent revolutionary of the 19th century, who successfully carried out the revolutionary activities beyond the British Empire. He was born at Chiyan Bali on March 10, 1872.[1] Many of his family members were in the goldsmith profession. Some of them were also in government service. His father died four months before his birth. Two years later, he had also lost his grandfather. His early life was full of misery. Therefore, his mother decided to stay with her father. His two maternal uncles were in Jampur, where his mother after the death of her father had settled.

Sindhi's schooling started with an Urdu Middle School in Jampur.[2] From childhood Sindhi was a very intelligent student and hence became popular in his school days. He had an inclination towards Islam and the study of *Tohftul Hind* made him embrace Islam. He got the book from one of his friends in 1884.[3] After reading the book, his belief on the authenticity of Islam got a further boost. Later, he came into contact with some more students from a nearby school. After Tohfatul Hind he also studied *Taqwatul Iman*[4] written by Ismail Shahid and *Ahewal-e-Aqeerat*[5] by Maulvi Mohammad Sahab Lucknowi. These books had deep influence on Sindhi's religious thoughts.

Sindhi embraced Islam on August 15, 1887.[6] Along with two of his friends Sindhi went to Kotla Ramshah, Muzaffargadh

district. There he got castrated. After some days, Sindhi left to learn Arabi.

Leaving one's religion and embracing another is not an easy task. Fortunately, Sindhi got a company of pious people like Hazrat Hafeez Mohammad Siddique of Baharchondi, in Sikhar district and Maulana Abul Hasan Siddique. These two saint-like figures played a very significant role in strengthening the confidence of Sindhi. Hafeez Mohammad Siddique once said that Sindhi had left home for embracing Islam and as such they should look after him as their own son. This statement of Siddique had a very deep effect on Sindhi, who started treating him as his spritual father. It was Hafeez Mohammad Siddique's love and affection that Sindhi made Baharchondi his permanent native place.[7]

Sindhi was always in search of knowledge. Therefore, he could not stay at Baharchondi for more than four months. While he was leaving Baharchondi, Hafeez Mohammad Siddique had prayed that Sindhi should get a well-established scholar. His prayers was answered as Sindhi got Mahemood-ul-Hasan as his master and mentor.

Before joining Dar-ul-uloom, Deoband and having had the company of Mehmood-ul-Hasan, Sindhi went to Bhavalpur, where Maulana Abdul taught him for somedays. It was natural that his mother insisted on taking her son home. However, Sindhi remained steadfast and refused to go with his mother. Later Sindhi moved to Kotla Rahamshah, where he learned about various Arabic schools, but preferred Dar-ul-uloom, Deoband, after a careful thought.[8]

In Dar-ul-uloom, he learned from various teachers before becoming a student of Shaikh-ul-Hind Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan. By 1360 Hijri he had studied many books and passed the examination with distinction. All the teachers heaped praises on Sindhi for his excellent performance and appreciated his unique way of giving answers. Later he approached Hazrat Maulana Rasheed Saheb at Gangwa.[9]

Sindhi was a multifaceted personality. He was not only a scholar of high caliber, but also a great revolutionary. After acquiring religious and political knowledge, Sindhi turned a

revolutionary. The writings of Maulana Shaheed played a very significant role in moulding Sindhi's revolutionary character. Sindhi successfully ran a school at Amrot and had a lion's share in the publication of various books, specially his journal *Hidayat-ul-Aqwan*.

As an examiner Mehemood-ul-Hasan once visited Amrot[10] and was highly impressed by the organisation of Sindhi. He invited Sindhi to Deoband and this was a beginning of the revolutionary career of Sindhi along with his master and mentor, Mehmood-ul-Hasan.

**Sindhi & Jamiat-ul-Ansar**

The teacher-student duo plunged headlong into revolutionary activities. The formation of Jamiat-ul-Ansar shows that Mehmood-ul-Hasan was aware of Sindhi's abilities. He was appointed the administrator of Jamait-ul-Ansar. Its first conference was held at Moradabad from April 15-17, 1911.[11]

Sindhi had stated in his speech, "Though it seems the aims and objectives of Jamait-ul-Ansar are more than expectations of the people, they are seconded by our members and elders. Those who are critical of its lofty aims are certainly true, because of our hapless condition and lack of required resources. But, I may be forgiven for the fact that the critics have failed to realise the honest and sincere attempt."[12]

The above statement of Sindhi makes it clear that despite lack of funds, infrastructure and weapons they started a revolutionary movement to achieve freedom for the countrymen.

**Nazarat-ul-Maroof & Sindhi**

The British Intelligence spread a rumour that Sindhi was expelled from Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband, because of his rebellious activities. But the case was quite different. He was sent to Delhi with the purpose of starting a revolutionary movement there through *Nazarat-ul-Maroof*, which was launched in the year 1913 (1331 Hijri).[13] Through this institution

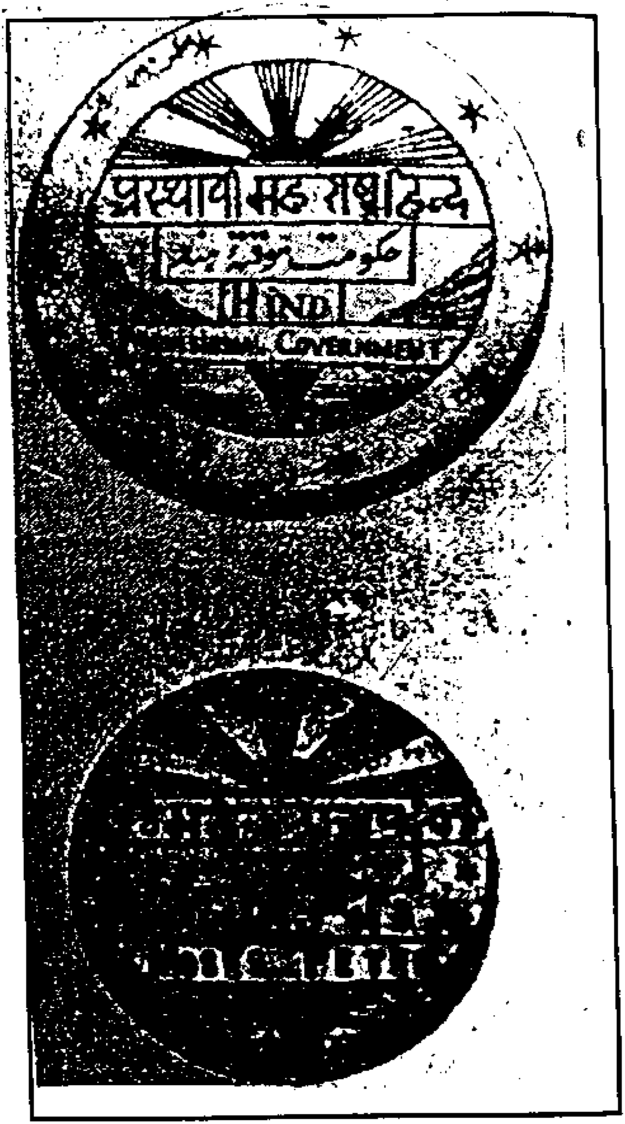
he was introduced to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulana Mohammed Ali. Needless to say, it once again proves that Sindhi was closely associated with Mehmood-ul-Hasan, who made the institute a medium of revolutionary activities of revolutionaries.

**Migration to Kabul**

Sindhi's migration to Kabul was successful due to the efforts of Mehmood-ul-Hasan. Though Sindhi was not in favour of migration to Kabul, he obeyed his teacher and migrated to Kabul. It was the real beginning of Sindhi's revolutionary career. Kabul was the most fertile land for revolutionary activities.[14]

Mehmood-ul-Hasan advised Sindhi to utilise the frustration of North-West Frontier against the British Empire, with the help of his ardent followers. Sindhi's meeting with Sardar Nasrullah Khan[15] further gave a boost to his plan. Nasrullah Khan was very impressed by the plan. This was the first meeting held outside India in a series of attempts to liberate the country from the clutches of foreigners. The next important meeting of Sindhi was with the King of Afghanistan, Amir Habibullah Khan,[16] who too was impressed by Sindhi's plan. During these days, the German Mission was staying in Kabul, but it was unhappy[17] with the attitude of the King. Sindhi utilised the situation and gained its confidence by offering cooperation in return.

Another important revolutionary programme of Sindhi was the formation of *Junud-Ullah* by mobilising migrated youths. Though Sindhi himself admitted that working in Junud-Ullah was like his days at *Nazarat-ul-Maroof* (a revolutionary organisation), the main purpose behind its formation was to carry out his mission. The youths were arrested in Kabul while they were going to Turkey to take part in a war against the British. Sindhi tried his best to convince them to stay and work with him as long as the Kabul Government allowed.




The logo of Provisional Government of India which had formed in Kabul.

Courtesy: Syed Ibrahim Fikri, Hindustani Musalmanoo ka Jung-e-Azadi Mein Hissa.

Photocopy of
Letter of Maulana
Obaidullah Sindhi addressed
to the Indians regarding
formation of Provisional
Government of India.
Courtesy: Syed Ibrahim Fikri,
Hindustani Musalmanoo ka
Jung-e-Azadi Mein Hissa.



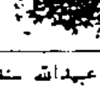

عارضی حکومت ہند کی خبر رولٹ سڈیشن کمیشن کی رپورٹ میں پڑھ چکے ہو - یہ حکومت
اس لئے بنائی گئی کہ ہند میں موجودہ غاصب غدار ظالم حکومت کی جگہ بہترین حکومت قائم ہو
ہماری عارضی حکومت چار سال سے مسلسل جد وجہد کر رہی ہے - اس وقت جب تم نے
ظالمانہ قانون کے نہ ماننے کا پکا ارادہ کر لیا - عین اسی زمانہ میں حکومت موقتہ بھی امداد
حاصل کرنے میں کامیاب ہو گئی -

حملہ آور فوج سے حکومت موقتہ ہند نے معاہدہ کر لیا ہے - اس لئے اس سے مقابلہ کر کے
اپنی حقیقی قوت ضائع نہ کریں - بلکہ انگریزوں کو ہر ممکن طریقہ سے قتل کریں انہیں
گاڑی اور ریلوے کی سہولتیں ریل تار خراب کرتے رہیں -

حملہ آور فوج سے امن حاصل کریں انکو رسد اور سامان سے مدد دیکر اعزازی
سندیں حاصل کریں -

حملہ آور فوج ہر ہندوستانی کو بلا تفریق نسل و مذہب امن دیتی ہے - ہر ایک
ہندوستانی کی جان مال عزت محفوظ ہے فقط وہی مارا جائیگا یا غارت
ہوگا - جو مقابلہ میں کھڑا ہوگا - خدا ہمارے بھائیوں کو سیدھے
راستہ پر چلنے کی توفیق دے

عبید اللہ
وزیر حکومت موقتہ ہند



چٹھی جو مولانا عبیداللہ سندھی کی طرف سے اہل ہند
کے نام جاری کی گئی

## Provisional Government

Sindhi's decision to join the provisional government was a landmark. Raja Mahendra Pratap and Maulvi Barkatullah were its President and Prime Minister, respectively. Sindhi was appointed a Minister for Internal Affairs. The mission to Russia was an important step of the Provisional Government,[18] specially the letter which was sent to the Czar. It shows that Sindhi's work was not confined to Yaghistan or Afghanistan, but he tried to gain the support of the Russian Czar through the Provisional Government.[19]

However, it was quite another matter that the Provisional Government didn't receive an encouraging response from the Russian Government. But this didn't dampen their spirits. The Provisional Government then decided to send two more missions to Istanbul and Japan. The Istanbul mission was entrusted to some of their most trusted revolutionary members, Abdul Bari and Shujaullah.[20]

## The Silken Letters Conspiracy

The conspiracy of the silken letters was a major plan and its architect was Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi. However, it was just a part of the greater plan of the mastermind Mehmood-ul-Hasan. Though the British Government tried to dump it, it got nationwide fame.

A letter was sent to Mehmood-ul-Hasan through Abdul Haque, who in turn was to hand it over to Abdul Rahim and latter would arrange its delivery to the person intended. In fact, there were three letters that Sindhi had written. One letter was addressed to Abdul Rahim[21] and the other two to Mehmood-ul-Hasan. They were written on three silk kerchiefs, the first one measuring 6″ × 5″, second 10″ × 8″ and third about 15″ × 10″ inches.[22]

The last letter appears to be an extension of the second one and bore the signature of Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi, whereas the first one was an introductory letter and was addressed to Abdul Rahim.

On August 14, 1915, the British police nabbed one Multan-based Khan Bahadur Rub Nawaz Khan,[23] who was in

possession of the three pieces of silk cloth. On interrogation, Khan Bahadur confessed that he had received those letters through the tutor of his children. Abdul Haque Khan's statement revealed that Haque had traveled to Afghanistan to receive the letters, which he was supposed to deliver in India to one Abdul Rahim in Hyderabad, Sindh. Thereafter, Abdul Rahim was to deliver them to Mehmood-ul-Hasan, who was in Madina at that time. Abdul Haque was instructed to take an acknowledgement receipt from Abdul Rahim.

The letters were, however, handed over to the Punjab CID,[24] which had started a thorough investigation into the matter. The testimony of Abdul Haque throws light on the conditions prevalent at the time of writing the letters. Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi had planned to overthrow the British rule with the help of his trusted followers and for this purpose he was also in touch with the tribal forces of the Frontier.

Sindhi wanted to capitalise on the people's feelings of distress and frustration against the British rulers. The main letter was addressed to Mehmood-ul-Hasan containing detailed information about his plans. A list of Junud-Ullah (*i.e.* salvation army) was also attached to the letter. The army was to be used against the British Government.[25]

**Disclosure of Silken Letters**

The disclosure of the silken letters shattered the whole revolutionary plan. Though in the beginning the plan was dubbed as a foolish act, the British Government ordered a thorough enquiry into it. Soon a series of arrests were made following the enquiry. The enquiry named 220 persons[26] involved in the conspiracy. The large network of revolutionaries involved in the conspiracy itself shows the seriousness of the plan.

The British Government then succeeded in nabbing Maulana Saif-ur-Raheman and got his support. Sindhi learned about failure of the plan after some days. He was also arrested in 1335 Hijri and was transferred to Jalalabad. A few days after some important arrests were made, the British officials then moved towards Yaghistan. Here once again the Britishers

used the money power and succeeded in getting vital support for their actions. They also misguided the masses by tellings them that a Jihad without a ruler is against the Islamic tenets. The countrywide arrests, money power and then misguiding of the masses by the Britishers dealt a crippling blow to the revolutionaries.

Sindhi then moved towards making some reforms and tried to get permission of the Indian educational institutions in Afghanistan. But the British Government had foiled this attempt also. After some time, the work of the Provisional Government was also banned.[27] Sindhi then had to form a Congress Party in Kabul. It was the first party formed outside the British Empire. On the one hand the tyranny of the British was at its peak during these days and on the other the political situation of the world had become more turbulent. Sindhi then decided to go to Moscow to study about the Russian Revolution.

## Study of Socialism

In 1922, Sindhi went to Moscow[28] and with the help of non-resident Indians there he studied Socialism. Since Russia had a pact with the Indian National Congress, she treated him as special guest and made all the arrangements for his stay. He succeeded in devising ways and means to protect his religious movement from the onslaught of materialistic and worldly concepts. Sindhi was grateful to the Indian National Congress, non-resident Indians and last but not the least the Russian Government, for extending their help and cooperation.

## Turkey Visit

Sindhi went to Anqara (Turkey) in 1923.[29] Moscow-based Turkey ambassador and the Russian External Affairs Ministry had secretly planned his visit and Britain didn't have a clue about it. It would be wrong to say that Sindhi had reached Istanbul when the Britain and France were occupying it. He stayed there for nearly three years and studied the history of Itehad-e-Islam Movement. But he didn't see any possibility of this movement becoming a reality in the near future and,

therefore, he thought it was necessary to merge his Islamic movement with that of the Indian National Congress.

**His Return**

The Indian National Congress wanted Sindhi to return to India. Apart from this, all of his friends also wanted him to come to India and made efforts for his return. He got permission to return to India on November 1, 1937[30] and finally it was decided to issue him a passport on January 1, 1938.[31]

In fact, Sindhi himself wanted to come back to India as he had been away for nearly 25 years, the last 12 years having been spent in Arabia. His friends in Arabia wanted him to stay there, but he said it was necessary for him to go to his native country. Finally, he left Mecca in 1939.[32]

At last Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi reached India in March 1939.[33] People had pinned many hopes on Sindhi and he too had great expectations from the people. He was accorded a warm welcome wherever he went, particularly in Karachi,Lahore, Deoband, and Delhi. But Sindhi's studies and experience spanning over 25 years created a yawning gulf between the masses and himself. When he started expressing his views, people drifted away from him. The Muslim League, Congress and Jamiat Ulema also preferred to remain aloof from the services of Sindhi. He presided over only two meetings of the Congress Committee of Sindh and Jamiat Ulema, Bengal province. He then floated his own party for the fulfillment of his programme. Though Sindhi was revolution personified, his own comparison with a flickering lamp made him more impatient and restless. Thus, he wanted to see end of everything that was against the interest of the country.

**Jamna, Narbada and Sindhi Sagar Party**

As mentioned earlier, Sindhi wanted to be a member of the Congress Party, promote the philosophy of Shah Waliullah and form his own party within the Congress. Thus, he floated a party called Jamna, Narbada and Sindh Sagar Party.[34] Its branches were also opened in Lahore and

Sindh, but the party failed to evoke the kind of support that was necessary for a political outfit and consequently it remained only on paper.

**Sindhi and Congress**

Maulana Sindhi used to openly declare in every meeting, public or private, that he likes the Indian National Congress. This was because he considered it to be the only political party that was respected in the country. Sindhi used to say on every occasion that the future of India and the Muslims lies in the unity of Hindus and Muslims and in accepting the Congress Party as the sole representative of the country.

Sindhi felt the need for a strong and matured political party for attaining freedom and keeping the country united. Besides, such a party was necessary for dealing with the international issues for there was a threat of India being created as a slave and suffer humanitarian before the international communities. Thus, there was no party other than the Congress that was in conformity with his thoughts. Sindhi was a Congressman and had always wanted to be so, but he however had some reservations about its policies. He used to consider the Congress Party policies as a permanent threat to the existence of Muslims.[35]

**Attachment with Dar-ul-uloom**

Sindhi had a special attachment to Dar-ul-uloom, Deoband. He had started his mission with Jamiat-ul-Ansar and throughout his life he used to think about the two institutions. After his return to India, Sindhi became very upset upon seeing that Dar-ul-uloom, which had produced a strategist and revolutionary like Shaikh-ul-Hind Mehmood-ul-Hasan and an expert in Islamic jurisprudence like Maulana Rasheed Ahmed, had become static and a centre of inactivity. He raised a hue and cry over the condition, but to no avail. However, he had to be content with the inclusion of Hajjat-ul-Balegha and books of Maulana Muhammad Qasmi in the Dar-ul-uloom curriculum.

**Death**

Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi bid adieu to this world on August 21, 1944, at Deenpur in Bahawalpur province.[36] In his death, the country had lost a great revolutionary. He spent his last five years and an equal number of months of his life in promoting the philosophy of Shah Waliullah. According to Dr. Moin Shakir:

"Maulana Sindhi was the most originate and progressive thinker of modern India." On his revolutionary character,[37] Dr. Moin Shakir opined that Sindhi appeared to the ulema as ultra revolutionary and repugnant to the scripture and therefore unacceptable. He always stood for liberty, economic equality, social progress and political awakening in society.[38]

## NOTES

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A rare photograph of Maulana Syed Husain Ahmed Madani, who inherited the legacy of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan and relentlessly fought against both the British and those who were against the composite nationhood.

*Courtesy*: Gurfan Ahmed M.A., *Freedom Struggle & the Muslims*, Faizaan Book Supplier, Delhi, 25th November, 1996.

# MAULANA HUSSAIN AHMED MADANI

He was a product of Dar-ul-uloom, Deoband, a distinguished educator, great freedom fighter, stuanch proponent of Hindu-Muslim unity and a strong advocate of composite nationhood. He enjoyed equal respect among both Muslims and non-Muslims. Yes, no marks for guessing. He is Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani.

Madani, who later earned the title of Shaikh-ul-Islam, was born at Bangaru Mau of District Anau (Uttar Pradesh), in 1879.[1] His father, Syed Habibullah,[2] was the headmaster of a middle school. The family of Madani belonged to the 19th generation of Chistiya sect.[3] Madani completed his education in Deoband and migrated to Mecca along with his father in 1899.[4] He took to revolutionary activities after the arrival of Mehmood-ul-Hasan in Mecca.

Madani was a poor man and often suffered economic hardships, sometimes to the extent of starvation. But he had full faith in Allah. He refused the proposal of his father to go back to India, mainly because he wanted to help Mehmood-ul-Hasan in his struggle against the British.

Though Madani had become popular following his imprisonment in Malta, his participation in the *Dastarbandi*[5] (convocation of all religious schools) programme of Dar-ul-uloom for which he undertook a tedious journey from Mecca to India, throws light on his love for the motherland and his revolutionary spirit.

After his participation in the Convocation Ceremony, Madani frequented Mecca, between 1913 and 1916.[6] During this period, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was in the forefront of Indian politics attacking the British policy through his journal *Al-Hilal*, which was instrumental in creating social and political awareness among the Indians.

A strong sense of nationalism formed the core of the political thought of Maulana Madani from the very beginning as the following statement shows:

"I have been associated with India's freedom struggle since 1914. I consider that it is a religious duty of every Muslim to oppose British. I was in an extremist party. Shaikh-ul-Hind, Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan was our leader when the incident of Asirane Malta had happened."[7]

Madani's political career started with an extremist party and he proved to be a devoted disciple of Mehmood-ul-Hasan. Both had a burning desire to liberate the country from the British might. Both did not hesitate in taking to the extremist path for achieving their objectives. The *Asirane Malta* was an important episode in this regard.

Madani attacked the British policies of imperialism. Formation of allied power and axis block was a logical consequence of the British imperial design. Madani did not refrain from flaying the policy of European nations in his various addresses.

Meanwhile, the British succeeded in creating a rift between the Arabs and Turks. They could achieve this seemingly impossible feat, thanks to the efforts of Mr Core Lawrence.[8] It is said that Mr Lawrence, in order to achieve his sinister goal, had converted to Islam and learnt the Arabic language. Through his fiery speeches, he was successful in turning the Arabs against Turkey. The revolt of Sharif Hussain, the Governor of Mecca against Turks, bears witness to this.[9]

On the one hand, the British had shown themselves to be ardent followers of democracy, but on the other hand did not hesitate in colonizing various Asian countrie. Madani was well aware of and was opposed to this dual policy of the British.

It may be mentioned here that the establishment of Nazarat-ul-Maroof by Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan[10] and Maulana Azad's idea of strengthening of nationalist feelings through Al-Hilal were aimed precisely at countering this.

The arrival of Mehmood-ul-Hasan in Arabia with the aim of promoting the revolution and his refusal to sign the *Fatwa* (decree) against Turkey added fuel to fire.[11] The goal of both the teacher and student was alike and so were the ways adopted to achieve it. Madani's selfless and unflinching support to his teacher in this regard is one of the important aspects of the ulema's participation in the Nationalist Movement.

The discovery of silken letters confirmed the fears of a conspiracy against the British, who consequently succeeded in nabbing Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan.[12] It may be mentioned here that Madani never left his teacher, Mehmood-ul-Hasan, even during latter's imprisonment in Malta. He chose to suffer with his teacher,[13] all the cruelties that British chose to inflict upon Mehmood-ul-Hasan. In fact, the British Government had no intention of arresting Madani, but he himself offered to be arrested, to be with his teacher. Madani spent three years and seven months in imprisonment.[14]

## Madani backs Non-cooperation

Madani's release from Malta and arrival in Bombay with his mentor, Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan, marked a new era in the history of freedom struggle. In the Khilafat conference held at Allahabad in June, 1920,[15] Madani supported the idea of non-cooperation with the British. The movement was actually launched in August, 1920.[16]

Madani issued 'fatwas' against the British from time to time. In July 1920,[17] Mehmood-ul-Hasan issued a historical fatwa exhorting people to oppose the British. The fatwa was signed by a large group of ulema. It rejuvenated the National Movement. An interesting thing about this fatwa was its scope, which covered not only the Muslims, but also the Hindus. It had a dramatic effect. Its each and every word spilt fire. And

finding it highly inflammatory, the British Government ultimately banned it.

### A Champion of Secularism and Nationalism

In 1921[18] at Karachi, Mohammed Ali Jauhar, organised a conference, in which questions were invited from public on national issues and answers were given. Madani gave answers to various questions from the people. Madani's answers aroused a national fervour. People began to look at him as a leader with a great vision. His nationalism was not restricted to mobilising Muslims alone. He understood the need for collective efforts of Muslims as well as Hindus for challenging the British rule. His secular credentials were recognised by one and all. Even Hindu religious leaders like Shankaracharya and Jagat Guru publicly supported Madani's stand and exhorted their community to follow him.[19]

This was enough for inviting the wrath of the Britishers. The government initiated actions against the fatwa of Madani. A suit was filed against him and those who were exhorting the masses against the administration. Madani and several others, except Jagat Guru, were arrested and imprisoned for a period of two years.[20]

### Hindu-Muslim Unity

The period immediately preceding the launch of Non-Cooperation is regarded as the golden period of Hindu-Muslim unity in the history of National Movement. However, in 1921[21] the progress of Non-cooperation Movement on violent lines and its consequent suspension by Mahatma Gandhi had created a sort of mess in the Indian politics and society. The Hindu-Muslim unity, built after long struggle and by the efforts of leaders, began to crumble and various parts of India witnessed communal riots. After his release from the prison, Madani addressed the 5th Conference of Jamiat Ulema at Kokanada in January, 1924.[22] His address was important for its stress on the two important duties of a Muslim:

1. Struggle against foreign government and
2. Freedom of India.

An extract of his address brings out this viewpoint of his:

> "Hindu-Muslim unity is a pre-requisite for freedom of India. It is the religious and political duty of the Muslims that they should work for freedom of India and continue this struggle until the Government accedes to their demand. It is their duty, which they must do with or without companions, it is the order of the Almighty. If non-Muslims extend to you the hand of friendship, you too must extend yours, for compromising for the right cause will establish you as true believers in Allah. And, if they (non-Muslims) turn their back on you and leave you alone, you should not complain about it because Allah is your biggest support."[23]

Tarachand, a well-known historian wrote the following lines about him:

> "He held that people of India irrespective of religious differences ought to form a united nation in order to secure Independence and pursue the policies of common welfare."[24]

Madani was an active proponent of Hindu-Muslim unity. The history of India shows that it is not possible to imagine a united and a healthy India without Hindu-Muslim unity. Madani devoted himself entirely to the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity. In his famous treatise, *Hamara Hindustan Aur Uske Fazail*, Maulana writes:[25] "Our religion tells us that Adam descended in India. He inhabited this land and it was from here that his race spread. There is a reference in "Subhat-ul-Marjaanll that heirs of Adam spread from here (India) and that they have cultivated this land. It is necessary for the Muslim to understand that this country was their old native place."

Madani through his speeches tried to instill a feeling of nationalism. He held that formation of parties like the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League had only served the purpose of the Britishers policy, *i.e.* divide and rule.

Madani was a staunch advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity. He wanted to involve the Muslims in the National movement and in the political mainstream by offering religious justification for the same.

**Madani and the Congress**

Madani was a supporter of the Congress Party largely because he felt it was the only nationalist party[26] that could accommodate both the Hindus and Muslims with ease. Maulana's leanings towards the Congress, however, angered orthodox Muslim leaders, who thought that the Congress was a Hindu organisation. This, however, did not deter Madani from openly advocating support for the Congress. He held that the Congress, though established by the British, was the only organization that had the capacity to work for welfare of the people. Madani was not ready to accept the view that the Congress was a Hindu organization, merely because it had more Hindu than Muslim leaders. He considered it natural that the biggest party was dominated by the majority *i.e.* Hindus, simply because India had a majority of Hindus. Madani argued that initially the Congress had several Muslim presidents, which highlights the secular credentials of the party. [27]

> "In 1896, Mr. Mohammed Rehmatullah Siyani was the President of Congress. In the year 1913,[28] Nawab Syed Bahadur was the President of the Congress and again in the year 1918,[29] Mr. Syed Ahsan held the post. From 1921 to 1923, as many as nine Muslims occupied the post of Congress President. The appointment of these persons as presidents of the Congress[30] shows that the party was not an organisation representing a particular community."

Madani visualised India to be a vibrant democracy sustained on the foundation of Hindu-Muslim unity. While giving reply to a question raised by Mohammed Siddiq Sahab,[31] Madani explained his stand on the political system in India in the following manner:

1. The system of India will be democratic. A president will be elected for a specific period. He may be a Muslim or non-Muslim. But he will not have kingly power.[32]
2. Muslims in India are in minority, but the state will protect their religious, social, political and economic

rights. The Central Government will have limited portfolios such as defence, foreign affairs, communication and finance. The states will enjoy autonomy in all spheres, barring those outlined above. Reservation will be given to Muslims, wherever they are in minority, so that they may follow their personal law.[33]

3. The education system in Muslim majority provinces will be under the state. Such states may form their own educational policies. But in the states where Muslims are in minority, the state governments will protect the right of Muslims to the religious education.[34]
4. Independence of the country is important to Muslims, because they will be in a better position to propagate Islam in a British-free India. The ouster of the British from India will be beneficial not only to the Muslims of India, but it will also free the other Islamic countries from their slavery. They will then be in a better position to perform their duties as laid down in Islam. India will have a big Muslim population and consequently several Muslim state governments.[35]
5. It is the duty of Muslims to convince their Hindu counterparts of the relevance of Islam. The Muslims should by their behaviour and attitude, prove themselves to be the followers of Islam. They should fight the British along with Hindus shoulder to shoulder. This is the only way to prove their credentials and demand their rightful share in the administration of the country.[36]

## Qutbaat-e-Madani

Madani was critical of those Muslims who chose to remain aloof from the politics of the land. He stressed that Islam seeks to establish a balance between the mundane and the spiritual. Madani understood that religion should constitute the basis of nationalism, but such nationalism should not be allowed to degrade into bigotry. Madani wanted the Muslims to come

into the political mainstream. He did not want them to stay away from the revolutionary activities of the day. He understood that Islam enjoins its followers to sacrifice their lives to save the honour of their nation. It was high time that Muslims proved their loyalty to their land through active participation in the struggle against British.

The task of Madani was not easy. He had to face stiff opposition from the hardliners who did not accept his theory of secularism and nationalism. While the public at large was attracted to Madani's philosophy, the spectre of two-nation theory was also beginning to haunt the community as such at that juncture. But it was the personality of Madani that sailed through smoothly amid the conditions of chaos to achieve the goal of unity and stability of the country.[37]

Madani in his address at Jamiat-ul-Ulema of Saharanpur[38] had made it clear that the country faced the greatest danger from the British policy of divide and rule. If left unchecked, it could cause untold harm to the country. He held that so long as the British stayed in India, they would continue playing the Hindus against the Muslims. By using this method, they could easily extend their rule.

The period between 1923-1929[39] was a period of transition from old to new. Lull in the nationalist activities following suspension of the Non-cooperation Movement gave an opportunity to the younger generation to assert itself. The period saw emergence of leaders like Pandit Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose on the national scenario. In the life of Madani, it marked the beginning of the second phase of the freedom movement. During this period, Madani conducted hundreds of public meetings, relentlessly appealing for national unity.

The British Government then did not want to take any chances in the aftermath of the Non-Cooperation Movement. They understood that if a wedge was not driven into the Indian society, it would take a short while for the Indians to demand and achieve complete independence. Hence, the British started playing the communal card.

In the meanwhile, leaders were disillusioned with

Gandhi's move to halt the momentum of the nationalist activities. People began to suspect the ability of the Congress and the formation of the Swaraj Party reflected the growing disillusionment with the policies of the Congress. Inactivity on the part of a major party like the Congress allowed the communal parties like the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League to come into the picture. It was a period when the British Government sent Simon Commission[40] in 1927 to India to assess the working of the Act of 1919 and to recommend necessary amendments.

**Madani and Simon Commission**

Madani, who was the then president of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, decided to oppose the Simon Commission and announced its decision at its Peshawar Conference. Madani made fervent speeches against the Britisher's intention of sending the Simon Commission and asked the people not to extend any cooperation to it.

Interestingly, the Congress followed Jamiat in opposing the Simon Commission. Thereafter, Jamiat and the Congress jointly organised strikes against the Commission when it actually arrived in 1928 in India.[41] Finally, the Commission went back without achieving its purpose, largely due to the combined efforts of Jamiat and the Congress.

**Madani and Nehru Report**

The Britishers were so confident of the disunity in the Indian political parties that they thought they could never agree on a common minimum programme, if given a chance to govern themselves. Hence, when the Indians rejected the Simon Commission, the British Government asked the Indians to draft their own constitution. It was like a challenge thrown to the Indian leadership, which it decided to accept and prove itself.

Parties like the Muslim League, Indian National Congress, Hindu Mahasabha and others held a joint meeting on May 19, 1928. A committee under the chairmanship of Motilal Nehru was formed[42] to prepare the draft of the constitution. Subhash

Chandra Bose, Sir Ali Imam, G.R. Pradhan, Shaikh Quraishi, Sapru and Sardar Mangal Singh were members of the committee. The committee after discussing the political and constitutional problems subsequently prepared a report known as the "Nehru Report". The Report was published on August 16, 1928.[43] While highlighting the rights of Indians as such, the report did not mention any specific rights of minorities. As a result, Jamiat rejected the report.

Following the rejection of the Nehru Report, the Congress held its famous Lahore Session on December 25, 1929.[44] Here the historical resolution for complete independence was passed. The decision of the Congress excited Madani. At a meeting of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind held at Amroha[45] between May 3 and 5, 1930 under the Presidentship of Maulana Moinuddin Ajmeri, a resolution supporting the Congress was passed largely due to the efforts of Madani. However, not all members of the Jamiat were happy with the decision of Madani.

Some ulema were of the opinion that instead of extending blind support to the Congress, it would be advisable to get the Congress round to accept the demands of Jamiat about rights of minority first. This was termed as 'compromise first movement' later.[46] Interestingly, Ali Brothers played a prominent role in forwarding this demand. This led to differences between the Congress and Jamiat.

**Madani and Salt Satyagraha**

Madani did not want Jamait to drift away from the Congress. He held that any deviation from the mainstream party would weaken the nationalist struggle. He kept working for ironing out the differences that had cropped up between the Jamiat and Congress even as a large number of his contemporaries (ulema) were wary of the Congress.

Gandhiji's decision to start the Salt Satyagraha (agitation) infused a new lease of life in the national movement, which was at a low ebb right from the time of suspension of the Non-cooperation Movement. The Congress started the agitation (satyagraha) with the Salt Satyagraha. Gandhi took up the issue of opposing the "Salt Act" and started his symbolic

"Dandi March" on March 12, 1930 from Sabarmati, Gujarat. His march received an overwhelming response with a sea of humanity joining him from all parts of the country.[47]

Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, under the guidance of Madani, wholeheartedly took part in this agitation. Mr. Fazal-ur-Rehman Sahervi and Mufti Atique-ur-Rehman Osmani participated in the salt agitation. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Hafeez-ur-Rehman, Maulana Syed Faqruddin Moradabadi, Maulana Syed Miyan Muhammad Deobandi and Bashir Ahmed Bhatta were arrested by the British Government for participating in the salt satyagraha.

It may be mentioned here that,[48] apart from logistical support to the salt agitation, Jamiat also played a vital role in creating mass awareness through its newspaper Al Jamiat. Jamiat's active role in the agitation brought it openly against the government. The British thereafter began to monitor its activities dubbing it as dangerous as the Congress for the government of the day.

### Case of Khissa Khawani Bazaar

The Britishers then suspicious of Jamiat's role, began to target it. The case of Khissa Khawani Bazaar amply illustrated the attitude of the government. On April 22, 1930[49] Pathans of Khissa Khawani Bazaar at Peshawar rose in revolt against the government. As usual the British chose third degree methods to quell the rebellion and as a result several Pathans were brutally killed. Maulana Mufti Kifayatullah, who was[50] the then President of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, sent a fact-finding committee to Peshwar, but the Government did not allow them to enter the city. The committee was compelled to stay at Rawalpindi[51] and somehow it managed to complete the investigations. It published its report titled 'Quami Awaz,' which was later banned by the government.

### Formula for Constitutional Draft

Following the disagreement of political parties on the Nehru Report, the Congress invited suggestions from a cross-section of society about the constitutional draft. Jamiat Ulema-

e-Hind proposed a formula after much delibrations, which was approved by the executive committee of the Jamiat at its meeting at Saharanpur on August 3, 1931.[52] Maulana Ahmed Sayeed, the then General Secretary of the Jamiat, sent this formula to various leaders of other castes and community for their perusal. The main thrust of the formula was on the following:

1. The culture of the Indian people, their language, script, religious education, religious institutions, religious acts, religious ceremonies, religious places and Wakf etc. are unique and independent. Future governments will not interfere in these matters.[53]
2. Special section should be included for the protection of Muslim Personal Law, safeguarding it against official interference.[54]
3. Only Muslim officers and Muslim judges should be appointed to decide Muslim religious cases. Quazis will be appointed and empowered accordingly.[55]
4. A Supreme Court should be set up to ensure protection of political rights in the provincial assemblies and the Federal Parliament.[56]
5. Administration in the border state of Baluchistan should be at par with that in other provinces and states.[57]
6. Right of franchise will be given to every citizen. No procedure will be adopted which may deprive citizens of their right to vote.[58]
7. Sindh will be declared independent and a stable state. All the income and revenue generated therefrom will be used only for its welfare.[59]
8. There will be no reservation for any caste and community in Punjab and Bengal. If any minority community demands reservation in these provinces, it will be provided keeping in view the population of other communities. Seats for minorities will be reserved as per the population ratio as was the case in other states. Minorities will be given the right to contest elections in unreserved constituencies.[60]

9. Federal states will be created in India. All states will be autonomous with necessary constitutional provisions to fight any injustice done by the federal parliament. The residuary powers will be vested in the states.[61]
10. Government jobs will be given to the deserving candidates who will be recruited through Public Service Commission, which will be an autonomous body. The Public Services Commission will decide the required qualifications and other eligibility criteria for the posts in question. Candidates will be recruited from all communities as per their population ratio. Every community will get its due share in the administration.[62]
11. The State and Federal Parliament will decide the issue of the representation of the minorities in the ministry after mutual consultation.[63]
12. Unless all states are willing, no change or amendment would be effected in the constitution.[64]
13. All sections of the formula are correlated, so if any section is changed, the whole formula will stand revoked.[65]

**Imprisonment and Release**

After Lord Irwin, Lord Wellington took over the charge on 17th April 1931.[66] Lord Wellington was opposed to Lord Irwin's policies. After failure of the Round Table Conference, Gandhi returned to India in 1931 and was subsequently arrested on 4th of January 1932.[67] The British government passed an ordinance that declared the Congress as an illegal body. With this declaration, the Congress dissolved its working committee and appointed a dictator.[68] Following the Congress Party, Jamiat too dissolved its working committee and appointed Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani as its dictator. The British then started proceedings against Maulana and decided to arrest him. But Maulana managed to evade the arrest for a long time.

Once Maulana was travelling on a train from Saharanpur to Delhi,[69] the British handed over to him first notice of his

arrest in English to which Maulana replied that he did not follow a foreign language. The officer then asked Maulana to lend him his (Maulana's) pen so that he would translate the matter into Urdu. Maulana retorted:

> "Strange! Should I myself present you with a weapon for my own assault?"[70]

When the train stopped at Muzzafar Nagar, the government served on him another notice through the Magistrate of Saharanpur, but Maulana refused to take it on the grounds that District of Muzzafar Nagar lay outside the jurisdiction of the Saharanpur Magistrate. By the time he arrived in Delhi, the date of the arrest order had already expired. Thus, Maulana managed to escape from the arrest, and it proved to be very important because his presence was necessary in those crucial moments of the British crackdown on the Congress leaders.

## Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind and Muslim League

At its convention held in March 1936, the Delhi branch of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind invited Mohammad Ali Jinah to attend the convention in the larger interest of the Muslims. Jinnah participated in the conference and an agreement was signed between Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind and the Muslim League.[71] According to this agreement, a Joint Parliamentary Board was set up with a view to contesting the election. The Board consisted of as many as 56 members in which there were 20 nominees from Jamiat. The Board was named "Muslim League Parliamentary Board". Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani gave his approval to the constitution of the Board and enthusiastically launched the election campaign.

Maulana addressed several election meetings across the country. He introduced the Muslim League in those areas where it was a non-entity. He made appeals to the public at large to repose trust in the Muslim League and send its candidates to the Parliament. Maulana made fervent appeals to his followers, students and members of Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Hind to support the Muslim League. Consequently, the candidates of Muslim League Parliamentary Board achieved

a big success. Several of its candidates won from various seats. However, the marriage of convenience between the League and Jamiat did not last long. Mohammad Ali Jinnah severed his ties with Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, possibly because Jinnah was not happy with Jamiat's relations with the Congress.[72]

مگر افسوس ہے کہ لیگ نے کامیابی ہونے کے بعد پہلے ہی اجلاس لکھنو میں اپنے عہد داور اعلانات
کو توڑ دیا۔ اور ان رجعت پسند' خوشامدی انگریز پرست لوگوں لو لیگ پارٹی میں داخل کرنے کے
خواستگار پُر زور طریقہ پر ہوئے۔ جن کو خارج کرنے کا اعلان کا تھا۔ اور اُن کی پُر زور مذمت
کررہے تھے۔ اور جن کے متعلق ہر شخص کو معلوم تھا۔ کہ ہمیشہ ان کی زندگی قوم تحریکات کی مخالفت اور
نگریز پرستی میں گذری ہے ان سے وہیں کہا کیا ک آپ نے تو وعدہ کیا تھا کہ ان لوگوں کو نکال دیا
جائے گا۔ آج ان کو لیگ میں لانے اور پارٹی میں جگہ دینے کی آپ کوشش کر رہے ہیں
۔تو بگڑ کر کہا۔ ''وہ پالٹیکل وعدے تھے''

Realisation that it was a Himalayan blunder to go along with the League dawned very late on Jamiat. It had failed to understand that the Muslim League never aimed at a permanent relationship with Jamiat in the larger interest of the Muslims.[73] Jamiat did not understand that his motive was merely to gain power first and foremost, irrespective of the consequences for the Muslims. The League had selfish motives while entering an alliance with the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind. The League exploited the goodwill of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind. Had it contested on its own, the League would not have managed to record such a big win. The League, taking advantage of the pact, became all the more powerful and ultimately raised the demand for Pakistan. It did not consult any member of Jamiat on the issue.

### Jamait Ulema-e-Hind and the Second World War

At the time of Second World War, the British once again sought the support of Indians, but this time most of the Congress leaders were cautions. They had a bitter experience with the British during the First World War. However, Gandhiji chose to be with British in their fight against dictatorial Germany. Gandhiji clarified that he was not happy with the British, but he nonetheless supported them only because they were fighting against the enemies of democracy. So convinced was Gandhiji of the utility of his weapon of *Ahimsa* (non-violence) that he was ready to preach it even to Hitler. Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, however, did not share the enthusiasm of Gandhiji. It opposed any support to the British in the war. At the annual session of its conference held on 16th September, 1939 Jamiat condemned the British policy of imperialism and declared complete independence as its goal.

In 1940, the British government banned Mehmood Miyan's book titled "Ulema-e-Hind Ka Shandar Maazi" and arrested the author. The book questioned the relevance of British rule in India.[74]

### The Conference of Bachar Ayun

Madani raised the issue of complete independence at the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind's Conference held at Bachar Ayun, Uttar Pradesh, from 23rd to 25th April, 1942.[75] Consequently, he was arrested on 24th June, 1942 and imprisoned for six months. He was released thereafter only to be re-arrested.

### Direct Action Day of the Muslim League

The Congress Party took a decision not to support the British's war efforts and it dissolved the ministry with the consent of Mahatma Gandhi. All the Congress ministers resigned and offered themselves to be arrested.[76] The nationalist movement acquired a new dimension. Sensing the drift in the Congress's Policy, the British manipulated the situation and sought the cooperation of the Muslim

League. The League took the advantage of the situation holding that the dissolution of the ministry would be in favour of the Muslims and it called for an Independence Day for Muslims.[77] The event marked the beginning of Partition of the country. The foundation for the state of Pakistan was laid.

Meanwhile, Madani adopted a new method to spread this movement. He clearly understood the deteriorating communal situation following the designs of the Muslim League. He decided to establish personal contacts with as many people as possible, apart from public meetings. He outlined his idea in a letter to Maulana Khuda Baqsh, Khatib of Multan. Madani wrote:

> "Read out the programmes of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, narrate them to others, and help in their publications possibly through Congress. Most importantly, contact people and convince them about our programmes. If somehow you cannot publish the programmes, at least distribute handwritten copies to the people."[78]

Madani advised the people that since the British Government was nearing its end, it was better not to keep the British currency anymore; instead it was better to withdraw such money from banks and use it for purchasing gold and silver.

Madani continued to stress the importance of co-operating with the Congress. He called upon the people to prioritize the issue of ouster of the British from India and not to fall to the selfish designs of the Muslim League. In his presidential address at the Jaunpur Conference of Jamiat, he came out openly against the question of lending support to the British war efforts. He quoted extensively from the Qur'an to support his contention.

Madani's efforts were directed towards moulding the public opinion, particularly the Indian Muslims, in favour of nationalism. He stressed that Muslims had a dual responsibility in this connection. On the one hand, they needed to serve their motherland and to end the imperialistic role of British's who exploited the Muslims the world over on the other.

Another important aspect of Madani's address was the issue of "National Unity". He emphasised the significance of the principle of unity in diversity, especially in those trying cirmcumstances when the country needed communal harmony more than everything else.[79]

## Cripps Mission and Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani

The Cripps Mission was an effort on the part of the British for settling the Indian political problem. The Cripps Mission stressed the need for holding fresh elections in the Provincial Legislatures. The elected members from the lower houses of the new provincial legislatures along with representatives of the states were to function as Electoral College,[80] which would then elect the constitution-making body. While the constitution-drafting body would draft the Constitution for the Indian Union, it would allow right of secession from Indian Union to any Province, which so demanded. Such a province would have right to formulate its own constitution and such a constitution would have same status, powers and functions as the Union of India. One of the objectives of the British in granting the provinces right of not acceding to a Union was to offer the solution to the communal problem.

Madani rejected the proposal of Sir Stafford Cripps. In his address at the Lahore Conference of Jamiat held in 1942,[81] he explained that the time for accepting the proposals of Cripps had long passed and now people would not settle for anything less than complete independence. Madani believed that the solution to the problems of India should come internally from Indians themselves and should not be externally imposed. The British had no business meddling in Indian affairs anymore.

Madani presented a formula, through which he put forth the demand for complete freedom that includes: the freedom of religion, caste, cultures and civilization. Such a freedom would not brook any official interference. Madani understood that people of different castes, creeds, cultures and religions reside in India. The next point of the Lahore formula suggested

that India should be a federation which provides for protection of the rights of minorities.

Extending his viewpoint, Maulana stressed the following at a conference held in Saharanpur from 31st January to 2nd February, 1945:[82]

1. The goal of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind is complete independence of the country.
2. In the freedom of nation, Muslims would be free. They would enjoy religious, linguistic and cultural freedom.[83]
3. We are for the complete autonomy of the Provinces and the Centre would get the residuary powers.[84]
4. The autonomy of provinces is necessary and useful for the protection of minorities as it would ensure that Centre would not be in a position to impose its dictatorial will on the provinces.[85]

It is clear that Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind wanted to ensure protection of religious, political and cultural rights of the Muslims. It wanted the federation because it offered better protection to the minorities without leaving them to the mercy of non-Muslims. This is further proved by the remaining points of formula:

(*i*) The parliament may have the following ratio: Hindus 45 per cent, Muslims 45 per cent and other minorities 10 per cent.[86]

(*ii*) If the Muslim members reject any proposal by 2/3rd majority, it will not be placed and passed in the house.[87]

(*iii*) There will be a Supreme Court having equal number of Muslim and non-Muslim judges. The committee will make the appointment of the judges from various provinces. The Supreme Court will settle the disputes between the Centre and provinces, and provinces themselves. The Executive Committee of the Jamiat approved the formula.[88]

Madani was an ardent follower of the policy of national unity. His various addresses emphasised its importance. He also brought out the journal named *National Unity*. In India people of different faiths and cultures have been residing since centuries. It is a unique example of unity in diversity. He criticized those people who blame the Congress. According to him the Congress was the only body, which advocated the liberty of religion, culture and language.

**Arrest of Madani**

The Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind's Conference held at Bachar Ayun, Uttar Pradesh, April 23 to 25, 1942.[89] At this Conference, Madani raised the demand for complete independence. This led to is arrest on June 24, 1942.[90] He was jailed for six months.[91] But agains on the expiry of the jail term, he was imprisoned up to August 26, 1944, under the Defence Act.[92]

**Madani and Muslim League**

With the end of the World War II, the British Empire had lost interest in some of the occupied countries. It, therefore, mooted a plan for granting independence to such countries. On September 18, 1945, it formally declared Central and provincial elections.[93] It was a critical phase, particularly for Muslims as they were at the crossroads with Madani and Jinnah advocating quite contrary causes. Madani was for undivided India, whereas Jinnah was hell-bent on his two-nations theory. Realising the seriousness of the situation, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad[94] condemned Jinnah. He also blasted the government for its covert support to Jinnah's party—Muslim League. Azad and Madani vehemently criticised the government's support to the League in the Bengal elections. The League, with the backing of the government, adopted unfair means in the elections. It also got full publicity from the government, while the Jamait had support of a love newspaper.[95]

### Foundation of Muslim Parliamentary Board

The government's support to the League and the latter's rising popularity shattered the confidence of other parties. The became restless. Madani called a meeting (Sept. 17-19, 1945)[96] of such parties. The meeting, attended by over 150 delegates from various parties, decided to oppose the League's decisive agenda tooth and nail and formed a Muslim Parliamentary Board.

### Cabinet Mission and Madani

Under the presidentship of Lord Pathic Lawrence a commission arrived in India on 23rd March 1946.[97] Maulana met with this commission. This meeting had historical importance because the proposal which Cabinet Mission had devised was on the lines of the formula of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind. But, the League proved to be a big hurdle in the way because it posed as the sole representative of Muslims and remained adamant on its demand for separate country.[98]

When the League objected to the formula of the Cabinet Mission, a proposal for temporary government was put forward. For the time being Mohammed Ali Jinnah accepted the temporary government proposal and gave up the idea of Pakistan. But once again differences cropped up on the issue of nominating Muslims by the Muslim League alone. His most repressive measure was the declaration of direct action on Ramzan 18, 1946 and declaration of non-cooperation to the Congress and its convention in Bombay.[99]

Consequently, the sinister plan of Jinnah became a reality, dealing a death blow to the efforts for a united India. Jinnah, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Madhav Singh went to England.[100] Jinnah managed to convince the Viceroy to accept his demand for creation of Pakistan. It was accepted first of all by the Muslim League on 3rd June 1947.[101] Later on the Congress Party accepted it on 14th June 1947.[102] Hussain Ahmed Madani and his party were totally against the Partition of India and were first to condemn it at a public meeting in Lucknow.[103]

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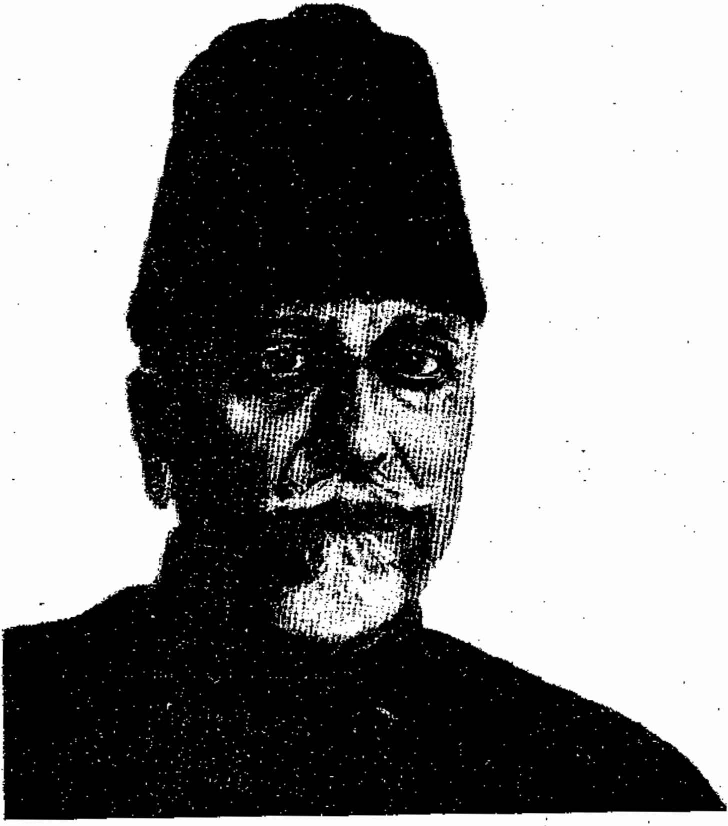
# MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD AND THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was born on November 11, 1888, in Mecca (Saudi Arabia)[1] into a very religious and educated family. His father was Maulana Khairuddin[2] and mother Aliya Begum. Azad's family name was Ghulam Mohiuddin, but he was popularly known as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

His father was a deeply religious man. His experiences during the Mutiny of 1857 exposed him to the horrors of the West. He found panacea for all the problems in strict adherence to his faith and culture.

Azad was educated in religious and Eastern cultural traditions. His hatred against Westernisation became the principal foundation on which Azad's early education was completed. Khairuddin was a scholar and after spending 20 years in Mecca, he came back to India. Azad's early studies in Mecca included, learning of the Qur'an and Hadeeth. Azad was a brilliant student and had achieved mastery over several subjects in his teens itself. Apart from the religious education, Azad also developed a very good sense of poetry and published a poetic journal when he was just 17.[3]

A multifaceted personality, Azad possessed mastery over Arabic, Persian, Chemistry, Astronomy and Medical Science.



Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who was born in Mecca in 1888 and died in New Delhi in 1958.

*Courtesy*: Farooqui Zia-Ul-Hasan, *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Towards Freedom*.

Though the publication of the journal at the age of 17 shows his extra sensibility, his book *Lisan-ul-Sidq*[4] intends to bring about social reforms in the Muslim community, promote Urdu, develop literary taste among the Muslims of Bengal and encourage criticism.

Duties of a Muslim include not only his obligations towards his community, but also the whole universe. The most important duty of a Muslim is his duty towards the nation. Azad was well aware of this fact. In fact, the publication of *Al-Hilal* is an attempt at criticizing the British policies.

Azad came in contact with Sir Sayyed Ahmed Khan and was highly impressed by his awareness of social problems. He realised the importance of English as the most important medium of communication between Indian nationalism and western imperialism and a bitter weapon for criticising British policies. However, he was to develop serious differences with Sir Sayyed's repeated insistence on the issue of loyalty to the British.

The Partition of Bengal was a turning point in Azad's political career.[5] He rejected the mainstream of middle class that was loyal to the British and plunged into anti-British campaign. He joined hands with the revolutionary leaders like Arbindo Ghosh, Shyam Sunder, Chakravarty and Lala Hardayal. It proves that his revolutionary activities began much before his journalistic career, which aimed at creating a feeling of nationalism, making the masses aware of the British policies and gaining the confidence of the young generation.

**Journalistic Career**

Azad's journalistic career spanned over three decades. Among his three journals, namely *Al-Hilal*, *Lisan-Ul-Sadq* and *Al-Balagh*, the first one became most popular. It reflected Azad's thoughts on religion and politics in general and nationalism in particular.

Earlier journals viz., *Vakeel* and *Sultanate* proved to be milestones in his career.[6] Before the publication of the *Al-Hilal* and *Al-Balagh*, Azad had toured Turkey, France, Iraq and Syria.[7]

It was a testing period for him because on one hand he belonged to a conservative family and was reluctant to accept a new approach to the old problems on the other. However, he managed to overcome this dilemma later.

Azad realised that Islam is a religion with a universal appeal. His writings in *Al-Hilal* since 1912 brought home this idea loud and clear. Mailk Ram observers,

> "*Al-Hilal* was published at a time when our politics was dormant. First of all, *Al-Hilal* criticised the British policy. It was due to the efforts of Azad that a feeling of nationalism was created."[8]

With the criticism of the British policy the 'critic era' started in the journals and Azad proved that the journals were the best means of mobilising people. It would be pertinent to say that the real revolutionary era began with the launch of journals like *Al-Hilal* and *Al-Balagh*.

From the political point of view, *Al-Hilal* played an important role in strengthening the confidence of Indian Muslims, which had been at a low ebb since the Mutiny.

Regarding these journals, Azad himself had said that due to their revolutionary nature and nationalist character, the era of criticism had started and it was earlier press, which had to be revised because of publication of *Al-Hilal*.

*Al-Hilal* and *Al-Balagh* were published at a time when the feeling of nationalism was taking roots among Indians, but due to lack of national leadership, it remained inactive. *Al-Hilal* hit the stands when people were in search of such a journal. People appreciated it wholeheartedly and soon its circulation jumped to a whopping 26,00,000 (twenty six lakhs) copies per week.[9]

Azad was a highly educated man. He had a very deep insight into social, religious and political issues of his time. He felt the need for creating awareness among the masses about his mission. He found a great admirer and supporter in Maulana Shibli.

Besides attacking the British government, *Al-Hilal* mobilised the Indians, both the rich and poor and strengthened the feeling of nationalism.

Islam is a religion, which has no place for injustice. Azad propagated this among the Indians, motivated them to rise against injustice and develop an identity of their own. Azad had a dual responsibility. First, he had to strive against the colonial power. Secondly, he had to restore the sagging morale of the Muslims. He shouldered both with great ease, mainly through his writings in *Al-Hilal*.[10]

He adopted a virulent anti-British tone. The British government was aware of only one side of Azad's personality *i.e.* his religious bent of mind, therefore initially they paid less attention towards his vitriolic attack through *Al-Hilal*. The rulers remained unaware for a long time about the awakening and nationalist feelings being created through *Al-Hilal*. But when they came to know about it, they swung into action and confiscated the journal on 18th September, 1913 under the Press Act.[11]

Before *Al-Hilal*, India had witnessed various political movements, especially by Muslims. One of them was Shah Waliullah's movement, whose legacy was later carried forth by Ulema of Deoband. In the same way, Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi's role in the Mutiny of 1857 had a prominent place. Though they tried to solve the problem of the Mutiny, the first war of independence came a cropper. In such circumstances, according to Sabauddin Rahman, it was *Al-Hilal*, which had instilled a sense of superiority among the Muslims.[12]

In order to create awareness about international politics, Azad obtained photographs of the Balkan and Turkish wars and published them in *Al-Hilal*. This infused a fresh zeal among masses about the national movement.[13]

The British Empire resorted to divide-and-rule policy in the wake of Hindu-Muslim unity in India. The effects of this divide and rule policy soon began to be evident. After the Mutiny of 1857, the British sidelined the Muslims, deprived them of benefits like granting higher government jobs and started favouring Hindus.

The foreign rulers allowed establishment of the Congress Party, which developed unity among the Indians. They also

covertly encouraged communal parties like the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League. Azad was opposed to both the Mahasabha and the League, as he found them to be big hurdles in the path of nationalism. He stressed the need of Hindu-Muslim unity and warned the masses against the communal parties.

According to Azad, both the Hindus and Muslims shared a common destiny. Therefore, he laid a great emphasis on the Hindu-Muslim unity. He said that he was first Indian and then Muslim.[14] He used to say that Muslims should consider India as their own country and according to Azad, this was a prerequisite for the Hindu-Muslim unity. Both the Hindus and Muslims share a common language and culture. Therefore, he asserted that it is necessary for both to join hands together against the foreign yoke.

*Al-Hilal* proved to be the best medium to convey the message of nationalism and unity. After developing the feeling of unity among the Indians, Azad next forceful message was 'Independence or Death,' which Gandhi later used in the slogan 'Do or Die.' This also shows Azad's influence on the thought of Mahatma Gandhi.[15]

In his address in the Congress meet at Ramgadh in 1940, Azad declared: "With all these feelings, I possess another sentiment, which the spirit of Islam does not check me. It is that I am proud of the feeling that I am an Indian and part of indivisible and united India.[16]

Azad believed that religion was the most sensitive issue and in order to save the unity of the country it was necessary that religion be interpreted correctly. He observed, "Religion will not be harmful at any cost. It will not be a hindrance in way of development." This approach of Azad developed perfect religious sentiments and promoted rational thinking among the people. It proved very beneficial for the Hindu-Muslim unity.

According to Dr. Radha Krishnan, "Maulana Azad was a great scholar, a self-sacrificing patriot and a statesman. He worked hard for the unity of India. He was a devout Muslim and an ardent patriot... He made no difference between a

Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or Christian. He believed that all those who were in this country belonged to one country. The national spirit was the driving force of his life. He was an apostle of the national unity and communal harmony."[17]

**Azad and Congress**

Azad's political career began with his entry into the Congress, after his release from Ranchi in 1916. Before his release, the Khilafat Movement and the formation of Jamiat-Ulema-e-Hind[18] were some of the important attempts, made by the ulema on the mass mobilisation front. Though the most burning issue that time was that of danger to the position of Khalifa The Muslim League had failed to take up the issue seriously.

Azad met Gandhi on January 18, 1920 in Delhi and this meeting proved to be a beginning of a new era.[19] According to Rashiduddin Khan, Azad's co-operation with Gandhi started with the Non-cooperation Movement. He writes:

"Azad was probably the very first person who fully backed Gandhi on his programme of non-cooperation."[20] Azad knew very well that the Non-Cooperation Movement was the most appropriate campaign that could put the British government in trouble.

After the Khilafat Committee meeting in Meerut, Gandhi and Azad undertook the tour of the country to mobilise support for the Khilafat Movement. Most of the time, Shaukat Ali and Mohammad Ali also accompanied them. But their mission received a big jolt when Azad was arrested.

After his arrest, the Congress was caught in difficulties as two groups viz. pro-change and anti-change had emerged in the party with Hakim Ajmal Khan and Motilal Nehru advocating pro-change policies.[21]

Zia-ul-Hasan Farooqui writes, "The formula of non co-operation, which Gandhiji had given to the country was dear to him, but as the man of the world, he saw that neither the ideal of non-cooperation nor that of non-violence would be served, if the two groups continued to wrangle among themselves."[22]

Azad was a young man, only 35 years of age,[23] who was elected as the President of Congress, and he was also the youngest president of the Indian National Congress. He was an ardent follower of the Non-cooperation Movement. Professor S. Noorul Hasan[24] praising Azad, writes:

"At this Congress session, Azad revealed the quality, which remained characteristic of him for rest of his life: He could always find a way out of a difficult situation provided that there was no compromise with imperialist rule."

The next most important event was the "salt satyagraha", which Mahatma Gandhi initiated with his famous "Dandi March". The British took a serious view of the agitation and sought to suppress it in the most tyrannical fashion. A large number of Congress workers were arrested and sent to jails. Maulana Azad, who was a prominent figure in the movement was also jailed. His imprisonment for about one-and-ahalf years brought him into national focus and subsequently he emerged as a national hero.

No doubt, the publication of *Al-Hilal* had already introduced Azad to the masses, but the 'salt satyagraha' made him a national hero. This was a period of great upheavals in the Indian politics. But the pro-change and anti-change leaders within the Congress raised a voice against Gandhi's Non-cooperation Movement.[25] Azad was the first man who wholeheartedly supported Gandhi.

The emergence of *Shuddhi* and *Tabligh* movements allegedly at the instance of the British Government dealt a severe blow to the national unity, as the people were divided along the communal lines. The fight with the British was, no doubt, difficult but it became increasingly difficult to save the country from the communal conflagrations.[26]

The communal polarisation within the country made Gandhi to observe a fast for 21days. Gandhi's fast proved to be damage-controlling exercise to a certain extent as it resulted in the unity conference, which was held on 26th September, 1924 in Delhi. The conference passed the following resolution:[27]

> "This conference deplores the dissensions and quarrels that are now going on between Hindus and Muslims in several

> places in India, resulting in loss of life, burning and plunder of property and desecration of temples. The conference regards them barbarous and contrary to religion. The conference tenders its warm sympathy to the sufferers. The conference is of the opinion that it is unlawful and irreligious for any person to take the law into his own hands by way of retaliation or punishment. The conference is of the opinion that all differences, no matter of what nature whatsoever, should be referred to arbitration and, if that be impossible, even to a court of law."[28]

Maulana tried to make it very clear that the Hindu-Muslim unity was the backbone of the National Movement and if any community faces danger, ultimately it disturbs the life of other communities.[29]

The British Government sent the Simon Commission to India to assess whether it was able to bear the responsibility of governing the country. Azad and Gandhi, however, opposed the Commission. In furtherance of the cause of non-cooperation, Azad visited Punjab along with Gandhi.[30] Despite the lack of Hindu-Muslim unity, Muslims remained in the forefront of the freedom struggle.

With the proclamation of the Government of India Act 1935, the Congressmen were divided into two groups over the issue of elections. One group was in favour of the elections, while the other was opposed to it. Azad was in the former group. He thought that lack of participation in the elections would result in undesirable elements dominating Indian politics. Therefore, it was the need of the hour that the Congress should take part in the elections. The Congress Party accepted Azad's point of view. Elections were held and the Congress emerged victorious in all the provinces, barring Punjab and Sindh.[31]

The Hindu-Muslim unity reached its peak in 1920, but it started collapsing thereafter with emergence of people like Mohammad Ali Jinnah on the political scenario. He declared,

> "We refuse to join Mr. Gandhi because his movement is not for complete independence of India, but for making the 70 millions of Indian Muslims dependent on Hindus."[32]

The statement of Jinnah clearly aimed at dividing both the Hindus and Muslims. Simultaneously, the role of Hindu Mahasabha, which was a brainchild of the British, also harmed the National Movement.

A Muslim League convention was held at Calcutta in 1928. All parties, including the Hindu Mahasabha and the Congress attended it. In this convention, Jinnah failed to find any solution to the problem of Hindu Muslim unity because the Hindu Mahasabha had adopted an uncompromising attitude and the Congress an indifferent posture.

Azad became worried about the future of India. He expressed his displeasure: "The Muslims were fools to ask for safeguard and the Hindus were greater fools to refuse them."[33]

Azad's statement shows that both the Hindu Mahsabha and Muslim League were not ready to come together on a single platform. The Hindu-Muslim rift was posing serious problems.

The formation of the Nationalist Muslim Party within the Congress in 1929 shows Azad's sincere efforts to build Hindu-Muslim unity. He was arrested in 1930 because of his active participation in the Civil Disobedience Movement, convincing Muslims to join the movement.

With the declaration of World War II, differences cropped up between Azad and Gandhi over the question of extending cooperation to the British Government. Maulana was against extending cooperation to the British Government because he held it would not serve any purpose helping such people who had no regard for the liberty of natives. But Gandhi had thought otherwise. He held that support to the British was in the interest of Indians because the British were fighting Nazis who were common enemies of democracy, the world over.

The Cripps Mission was another challenge before Azad, though it was for the first time that the British Government had shown some concern about the rights of Indian people and their independence. By profession, Sir Cripps was a lawyer

Commenting on the Cripps Mission, Gandhi said, "The proposal was nothing but a post-dated cheque." This was because it had mentioned nothing about independence and failed to satisfy all the parties, including the Muslim League, Hindu Mahasabha and members of the Scheduled Castes.

Azad wrote a letter to Sir Stafford Cripps about India's problems that could be very harmful in future. And he was shocked to receive a reply from Sir Cripps putting the blame for all the problems on the Congress.[34]

Azad said that no doubt for the first time, the British Government had thought of granting independence to India and allow the people to work out a constitution. But the British government might backtrack at any moment and scuttle the efforts of the Congress Committee. Azad's right decision at the right time and his foresightedness saved India from the plans of Cripps Mission.

Though Azad and Nehru were the best of friends, the latter's statement to the New Chronicle disturbed the former. Nehru remarked, "He tried to represent that though Congress had rejected the Cripps offer, India was willing to help the British, and could not offer full support only because of the policy the British Government had adopted."[35]

Disappointment and discontentment prevailed in the country following the failure of the Cripps Mission. The relations between India and England were severely affected. Besides, the deplorable economic condition of the country had created chaos, confusion and anarchy. In 1942, the people were restless and hence in such a situation, it was necessary to launch a movement in India which could strengthen the feeling of nationalism.

Azad became worried about the advancement of Japanese army into India. The situation became very critical. Gandhi was of the opinion that the Japanese army was not India's enemy, but it was rather an enemy of British. Azad was surprised to note Gandhi's opinion and expressed his

than that of British, but even Gandhi was not in favour of starting any movement against it because, according to him, it was against the spirit of democracy to oppose those who were fighting against the onslaught of fascism. Azad wrote in India Wins Freedom,

> "I had already taken some steps in anticipation of a possible Japanese attack on India. I had asked the Congress organisation to carry on propaganda to build up a public resistance against the Japanese. I had divided Calcutta into a number of wards and started to recruit and organise bands of volunteers pledged to oppose Japan. These volunteers were instructed to place every possible obstacle in the way of Japanese army."[36]

Azad's differences with Gandhi were mainly because of their varying approach. Azad writes,

> "I was surprised to find that Gandhiji did not agree with me. He told me in unequivocal terms that if the Japanese army ever came to India, it would come not as our enemy but as the enemy of the British. It was his view that if the British left, the Japanese would not attack India. I could not accept his reading and in spite of long discussions we could not reach an agreement. We, therefore, parted on a note of difference."[37]

On December 31, 1940 Azad was arrested for participating in Satyagaraha and was sentenced to two years imprisonment. However, following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941, he was released.

**Quit India Movement and Azad**

The decision of launching Quit India Movement was taken at the Wardha Session of the Congress, where Azad said,

> "I must confess that I feel unhappy about the whole situation. I did not oppose the resolution urging direct action, but I was not very hopeful about its outcome."[38]

The Quit India Resolution was passed at a time when Azad was arrested in Bombay in Dhirubhai Desai's house,[39] and was imprisoned in Ahmednagar jail, where he produced his various literary works. Azad had to suffer solitary

imprisonments. He was not even allowed to meet his dying wife. He was released after a period little over three years.

By the end of the World War II, there was a constant pressure on the Great Britain, especially from A. Roosevelt, to grant independence to India.[40]

**Simla Conference**

Azad met Lord Wavell in Simla on 25th June, 1945.[41] The meeting was held in a very cordial atmosphere, which was partly a result of the changing international politics. Azad came to the conclusion that the British were really in favour of granting independence to the Indians.

It was the responsibility of every citizen to make the country independent. But the Muslim League was creating a hurdle in this direction. The Muslim League by keeping itself aloof from the situation thought that it would gain the confidence of the British Government, but it was not to be so. The statement of Viceroy in the Simla Conference proved the point. The Viceroy emphatically said, "there was no question of the Government supporting the Muslim League. If the leaders of Muslim League had any such idea, they were completely mistaken."[42] Begin new year, he assured the conference that the government was and would remain neutral. This statement of Viceroy makes it clear that the British accorded no special consideration to the Muslim League. It showed that the British Government had no place for the League's gamble and they tried to play neutral by trying their best to solve the deadlock through the of Congress Party.

The Simla conference however didn't succeed. Commenting on this, Azad said,

> "We had gone as far as we could to meet the wishes of Jinnah, but we could not accept his claim that Muslim League was the sole representative of Congress and authoritative organisation of Muslims of India. In the provinces, where Muslims were in majority, there was no League minister, there was Congress ministry in frontier province. In the Punjab, it was a union ministry. In Sindh, Sir Gulam Hussain depended on Congress support and the same position held in Assam. It could not,

> therefore, be claimed that Muslims were represented by the Muslim League. There was in fact a large block of Muslims who had nothing to do with the League."[43]

The statement makes it clear that Azad insisted on the national character of the Congress and was not ready to compromise. The differences between the Muslim League and the Congress Party had reached such an extent, that they appeared almost insurmountable. Mohammed Ali Jinnah was adamant that his organisation was the sole representative of the Muslims of India, which Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was not prepared to accept.

After the failure of Simla Conference, Azad had lost his health considerably and his doctor advised him to go Kashmir for a change. After the end of World War II, the Labour Party had come to power in Britain, and it expressed its seriousness in granting independence to India. As an attempt in this direction, it sent the Cabinet Mission to deal with the issue of Indian independence. Maulana had pinned great hopes on the Cabinet Mission because of the obvious sympathies of Labour Party towards the political turmoil in India. The Mission proposed the idea of a united India, and it refrained from allowing Muslims to constitute a separate state.

Despite his deteriorating health, Azad left for Delhi. In Delhi, he had difficulties in convincing Gandhi and a large number of Congress workers about the importance of the Cabinet Mission. With the failure of earlier British proposals, Gandhi was not all that hopeful about the sincerity of Cabinet Mission in addressing the problems of Indians.

Azad was convinced that Indians did not stand to gain any better terms than those offered in the Cabinet Mission. Besides, even the Muslim League accepted the offer. Azad wrote:

> "Acceptance of Cabinet Mission Plan by both the Congress and the Muslim League was a glorious event in the history of freedom movement. It meant that the difficult question of freedom had been settled by negotiation and not violence, we rejoiced but we did not then know that our joy was premature and bitter disappointment awaited us."[44]

Azad had thought that acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan would provide the final solution to the communal tangle that posed a great threat to the unity and integrity of the nation. He was, therefore, insisted that the Congress accept it. However, his great expectations were soon going to come to nought.

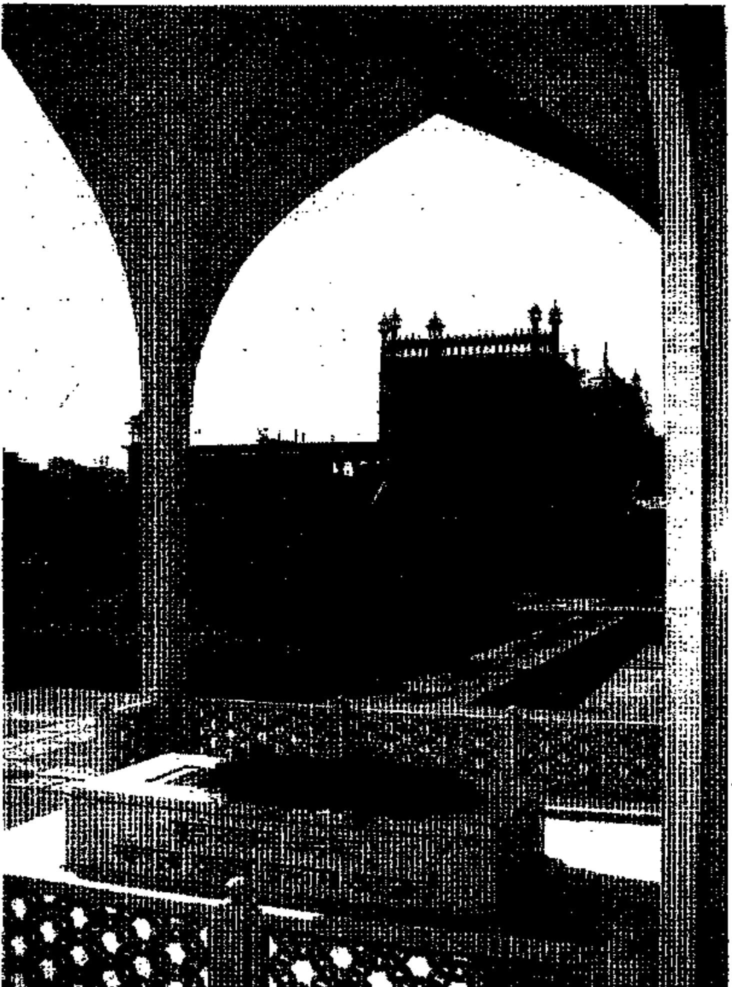
It all began with a statement of Nehru that the Congress would enter the Constituent Assembly "unfettered by agreements and free to meet all situations as they arise".[45]

The League along with several others thought that this meant non-acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan. To Azad, this was the most unfortunate thing to have happened, because it gave Jinnah an opportunity to reject the Cabinet Mission Plan and repeat the demand for Pakistan. Azad felt that if both the League and Congress had been serious about accepting the Plan, they would certainly have avoided the partition of the country. But it didn't happen that way.

Throughout his life, Azad struggled to purge nationalism of religious orthodoxy and narrow-mindedness. He held that every Muslim was a member of Indian nation and could not by virtue of common bond of religion, separate himself from the larger Indian society and claim the status of independent nationhood. Although deeply religious, he would not support nationalism based on religion. Azad was convinced that nationalism in India was not possible without Hindu-Muslim unity, which to him was far more important than even the freedom of the country.

Azad was perhaps the most vociferous champion of Hindu Muslim unity and retained faith in that idea even when others had started faltering, following the flow of events. He exhorted the Muslims time and again to stay in the political mainstream and fight the divisive forces within. For this and other reasons, the Muslim League taunted Azad as the biggest enemy of the Muslims in India.

However, his critics were shortsighted. They could never understand that it was in the light of true spirit of Islam that Azad had propagated his ideas of nationalism, while the people who laughed at his approach were the



Azad's mausoleum and Jama Masjid Delhi in the backgrounnd.

*Courtesy*: Douglas Ian Henderson, *Abul Kalam Azad: An Intellectual and Religious Biography*, Oxford University Press, 1988.

ones whose interest did not go beyond narrow political gains.

## NOTES

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# CONCLUSION

History has rarely searched the role of ulema in the nationalist movement. It is generally thought that ulema are incapable of coming up to nationalist aspirations because there is a tendency to think that Islam and nationalism cannot be synthesised. One of the common perceptions has been that madrasas are the bastions of fundamentalism and terrorism and ulema are the inciters of fanaticism. Muslims have largely been dubbed in the history, as supporters of separatism, and roots of their isolationist penchant are traced to the emergence of the Muslim League and its consequent victory in the birth of Pakistan.

It may be noted that the above perception is off the mark. In the preceding chapters, I have made an honest attempt to study the role of ulema in Indian politics between 1857 and 1947, and drawn the following conclusions.

Muslim ulema had played a pro-active role in the liberation of the country. Their efforts might not have always yielded positive results, but their commitment had been exemplary. Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi, Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan, Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi, Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani, to name a few, may specifically be mentioned in this respect. Unfortunately, these personalities could not secure a place for themselves in the history because the historians had more or less chosen to neglect them.

The personality of Maulana Qasim Nanawtawi, the founder of Darul-Uloom, Deoband, surfaces as a link, bridging the

chasm between tradition and modernity in the Muslim society. Deoband was a product of his revolutionary thinking. The Deoband School was, in fact, the need of the hour. Nanawtawi lived in the circumstances, which saw several reform movements in the country. However, it was a stupendous task for Nanawtawi to implement the reforms given the inward-looking attitude of the Muslims, particularly after the Sepoy Mutiny. His personality reflected a balanced combination of a social thinker and a revolutionary. The Battle of Shamli and Thana Bhavan prove this beyond doubt. Although these movements did not succeed, they do throw light on the fact that, revolutionary tendencies started making appearance among the Muslims.

Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan, a student of Nanawtawi, clearly appears as an acme of anti-British revolutionary activities, in this context. Largely responsible for infusing the spirit of nationalism within the conservative precincts of Deoband, he was totally uncompromising on the exit of the British from India. In the towering personality of Mehmood-ul-Hasan, we find the perfect synthesis of Islam and nationalist aspirations.

Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan's presence at the helm of Deoband gave the school a revolutionary character, which it never had before. Besides, Mehmood-ul-Hasan's audacious mission in Afghanistan and his subsequent journey to Mecca are clearly a high watermark in the nationalist efforts of the Muslims.

The founding of Samrat-ul-Tarbiat in the year 1879 by Mehmood-ul-Hasan marked the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Muslim nationalism. This organisation, which was meant to train the revolutionaries against the British forces, was to become a forerunner to various other Muslim revolutionary organisations that were to spring up on the national scenario later.

Samrat-ul-Tarbiat soon became an umbrella organisation that the leaders, like Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Maulana Mohammed Ali regularly frequented. Commenting on this period the then Lieutantant Governor

General of Punjab, Sir Wenbrell Eston observed that the lithe period of 1908-09 was full of chaos and confusion. It provided a fertile ground for the activities of Mehmmod-ul-Hassan and his followers. Largely with the intention of broadening its base, Samrat-ul-Tarbiat was rechristened as Jamiat-ul-Ansar in 1909.

Mehmood-ul-Hasan chose Afghanistan as a launch pad of revolutionary activities against the British, because he found in Afghan people an ardent desire to fight against the British. Their guerrilla tactics were successful even against modern weapons, which the British used. However, the British managed to create a rift among these people by their policy of divide-and-rule. They succeeded in influencing the Sardar of Yaghistan against his very people with a result that people lost faith in his authority.

The anti-British revolutionaries in Yaghistan invited Mehmood-ul-Hasan to guide them in their liberation struggle in the backdrop of the deception by their Sardar. Mehmood-ul-Hasan could hardly resist the invitation, but he couldn't travel to Afghanistan for reasons, like strict vigil across the country, shortage of funds, lack of support and so on.

In an attempt to overcome these problems, Mehmood-ul-Hasan decided to travel to Arabia to muster the support of Turkey. However, in Mecca, following the revolt of Sharif Hussain, the Governor of Mecca, who was against Khilafat that was based in Turkey, and the consequent failure of the Silken Letters Conspiracy nipped the entire plan of Mehmood-ul-Hasan in the bud itself. He did receive the support of the people across the border, like the Turkish Governor, Ghalib Pasha, issuing a message specifically to the Indian Muslims asking them to support Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan in his revolutionary activities. However, this message didn't produce the desired results largely because his appeal remained confined just to the Muslims of India. In short, with the exception of a few of his students, Mehmood-ul-Hasan never received a full-fledged support from any quarter.

Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan also founded Nazarat-ul-Maroof later with the similar intention of training the

revolutionaries. The task of managing the affairs of this organisation was subsequently given to Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi.

A trusted disciple of Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan, Maulana Sindhi carried the legacy of Mehmood-ul-Hasan forward and can be compared with Subhash Chandra Bose especially in his valiant efforts *i.e.* challenging the British Raj by armed means. Maulana Sindhi under the guidance of his teacher left the mainland for Afganistan to co-ordinate the revolutionaries there. Maulana Sindhi was not just an emotional nationalist; he was a calculated thinker, who believed in the efficacy of an organisation if the fight were to be waged against as big a power as the British. Maulana Sindhi threw a tough challenge before the British. However, the failure of Silken Letters Conspiracy left the movement of Sindhi attenuated. However, the way he planned to overthrow the British rule goes on to show the extent to which the ulema had gone to challenge the British authority.

Maulana Sindhi was instrumental in coordinating the revolutionaries in Kabul where he was stationed at the behest of Mehmood-ul-Hasan. An interesting aspect of Mehmood-ul-Hasan's movement was that, it had international dimensions involving Arabia, Turkey, Russia and Germany. Missions were also successfully sent to Russia and Germany. These countries in turn had accepted his proposal to lend their support to him in this struggle.

Under Sindhi's leadership, the Afghan Plan of Mehmood-ul-Hasan underwent a tactical extension. Sindhi was a practical thinker and had a definite strategy for leading the revolutionary movement. He believed more in necessity of and planning a party rather than emotional outbursts against the British.

Sindhi was supposed to wait for the completion of the mission of Mehmood-ul-Hasan in Arabia, which involved taking the support of Turkey and Arabia against the British. However, since Mehmood-ul-Hasan didn't succeed and was subsequently caught and imprisoned following the discovery of silken letters, Maulana Sindhi had to wage the battle against

the imperialist power almost individually. In his struggle, Sindhi took a cue from the Holy Qur'an and from his thorough knowledge of revolutionary movements, particularly those of the socialist movements across the world.

It goes to the credit of Sindhi, that he contacted the German and Turkish Missions, then part of the Axis powers, and assured them that with their support, he could decidedly attack the British with the cooperation of the Afghan people. Both these missions readily agreed, but the plan failed to materialise largely because it was restricted to the Muslims with little focus on the involvement of the people from other communities.

However, this does not mean that Sindhi's movement was limited to Muslims. Far from it, the idea of provisional government with Mahendra Pratap as its head, clearly brings out Sindhi's secular approach to politics. He had a lot of differences with Raja Mahendra Pratap, but those had more to do with ideology and planning than religion.

All in all, it can be said that had the silken conspiracy succeeded, it would have posed a very serious challenge to the British rule in India. However, if we analyse the end of the silken conspiracy, the British managed to finish it off with ease merely after nabbing one person, Abdul Haq, who confessed everything. It may be mentioned that the silken letters conspiracy though seemingly strong in the beginning, lacked the very element that is focal to any insurgent movement aimed against an imperial power. It was a conspiracy hatched by the ulema had religious overtones, and was based on teacher-disciple relationship. Although Sindhi's zest for freedom could hardly be doubted and Mehmood-ul-Hasan's commitment to the idea of liberation was gospel truth, what was missing in the whole exercise was the back of a mass base.

Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani was another committed disciple of Mehmood-ul-Hasan, who endeavoured to complete the unfinished task of his teacher. Although not involved in the Silken Conspiracy, Madani chose to accompany his teacher to prison when the latter was charged with hatching the conspiracy.

One of the important contributions of Maulana Madani was to mobilise the masses against the British by openly supporting the Congress. He understood that it was only the mainstream party, like Congress, which could articulate the national aspirations of people in general. Madani believed that the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity could be resolved later, the first priority being the ouster of British. One of the grave errors of the communal parties was to give precedence to the internal problem of divergence of Hindu-Muslim interests over the liberation of country. The British were clever enough to understood this and played one communal party against the other. Consequently, the freedom of the country was delayed.

Madani stressed that the issue of liberation from the foreign yoke was more important than the communal issue. He pleaded with Muslims to support the Congress and relied upon the Holy Qur'an for explaining to them the supreme importance that Islam accorded them the idea of rendering loyalty to the nation. Madani thought that since the Muslims had been staying in India for centuries and they could continue living with their Hindu brethen so long as their rights were protected in this country. He was also opposed to the separatist demands of the Muslim League, which he found to be posing a greater danger to the interests of Muslims themselves.

Despite stringent opposition from the fellow ulema, Madani continued to expound the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity, support for the Congress and managed to influence a large chunk of the Muslim population. It is, however, a unfortunate that while Madani failed in forging the unity of action, the League succeeded in its divisive designs.

Madani was a vociferous proponent of the Hindu-Muslim unity. His efforts at forging communal unity were important because it was a period when the communal parties were having a field day. However, Madani's efforts did not fructify and this is a tragedy for a man who had devoted his life to instilling the nationalist spirit among the Muslims. One of the mistakes, if we were to call it so, of Madani was to acquiesce and work with the Muslim League in tandem and in almost accepting the League's proposal for the formation of Muslim

parliamentary board. He did so with a view to bringing all Muslims on a single platform against the common enemy, *i.e.* the British. He did not realise that the League was too opportunistic for his planning, and it proved its untrustworthy character immediately after it had won the elections with the support of Madani.

Consequently, Madani's cooperation with the League, though for a short period, proved a bane of all his efforts at achieving communal unity. The League ditched Madani the moment its purpose was achieved. Throughout his life, Madani fought for the cause of the unity of people. It is a irony of fate that in the mad rush of events, people rather chose to follow the call of passion, rather than listen to the voice of reason. The partition of country marks, among other things the utter failure of Madani's philosophy.

Coincidentally, the success of the League did not mean that it had the support of the vast majority of the Muslims. On the contrary, a large number of Muslims including the ulema opposed the policies of the League. But communalism was not one-sided. It thrived on the both sides equally with one communal party complimenting the agenda of another. The communal parties, both the Hindu as well as the Muslim outfits, fed and fattened on each other's rhetoric and expense.

Maulana Mohammed Ali along with Maulana Shaukat Ali played a commendable role in the nationalist movement. Starting with the Khilafat Movement, MohammedAli's association with the Congress and his proximity to Gandhi in the initial phase of Non-cooperation Movement was an epoch-making period in that, it witnessed a kind of Hindu-Muslim unity, which remains unprecedentemd in the history of modern India.

Although, he later drifted from the Congress following the suspension of Non-Cooperation movement and the submission of Nehru Report that rejected the idea of separate electorates for Muslims, his attachment during the Khilafat agitation with the Congress and his stupendous efforts at mass mobilisation cannot be ignored.

Mohammed Ali represents the pan-Islamism and religious revivalism in modern India. He espoused the cause of Hindu-

Muslim unity but failed ultimately to check the divisive designs of the League. As Dr. Moin Shakir concluded, he ended up supporting the cause of the League without ever having meant to do it.

The subject will remain inconclusive without the mention of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who relentlessly struggled for the country's independence and integrity. He stood up for almost 50 years as the champion of the Hindu-Muslim unity, freedom and democracy. Initially, Azad was not against the British. He remained so till 1905. But later, he began to realise the British government was not that benevolent and that its rule was suppressing the rights of the countrymen. No sooner did he realise this, than he plunged straightaway into the national movement to free the country from the oppressive government.

As he was a man of letters, he started an Urdu journal *Al-Hilal* in 1912, which was an organ of this movement. Within three years of its publication, *Al-Hilal* succeeded in bringing about a revolution in religious and political views. However, many Muslims, mainly Pakistani, and non-Muslim historians had dubbed him as Pan-Islamist in the period between 1912 and 1922. Their opinions about Azad were based on: his inclination towards Sayyed Jamaluddin Afghani, who was a Pan-Islamist; concern about Muslims abroad; open sympathy for Turkey during the world war; religious colouring of his political message; use of religious idioms and symbols with references to relevant scriptural verses in his editorials and articles in *Al-Hilal* and *Al-Balagh;* and his prominent role in the Khilafat Movement.

The observation of Rajat Ray can be cited here as a befitting reply to the critics of Azad: He writes:

> "It was no reactionary fundamentalist philosophy that he brought back with him from the Middle East, but a vision of national revolution. It must be stressed that nationalism was an integral part of the Pan-Islamic outlook, that he acquired during his tour of the Middle East. When he identified himself emotionally and intellectually with the Islamic world of the Turks, the Arabs, and the Iranians, he identified himself with

> the urge for national liberation that was stirring these peoples and his own people back in India. Therefore, Azad stuck to the nationalist movement even in the difficult decades of the Thirties and the Forties, when many Khilafat leaders turned against the Indian National Congress. His decision to stay with the Congress isolated him from the majority of his own community. He could accept this and go through that dark period when his world lay in shambles because of his intense moral conviction that nationalism and Islamic brotherhood were not contradictory, but one and the same thing. This conviction made him a true believer in the concept of Islamic brotherhood and was a good nationalist based on his Middle Eastern experience."

As for the religious tone of Azad's message, it was the same case with other nationalist leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi, who used religious idioms and symbols for a political purpose. This doesn't mean that they promoted subservience of politics to religion. It was, in fact, a peculiar style of Azad that he never allowed the religiosity of his call to dwarf his political and nationalist purpose. Though Azad was influenced by Sir Sayyed Ahmed Khan for his intellectual development, he was opposed to the latter's policy of submission to the British.

From the beginning, Azad stood for the Hindu-Muslim unity. He was convinced that the freedom struggle should be a joint mission of both the communities without which it was impossible to accomplish the ultimate goal. His journal *Al-Hilal* and his relentless efforts in direction of Hindu-Muslim unity are a testimony to this fact. Till his death, Azad never faltered in his conviction that Muslims in India must work with Hindus and other fellow citizens. Later, his association with the Congress through the thick and thin speaks volumes about his crusade for freedom, unity and democracy. However, like other nationalist leaders, Azad also proved too weak to scuttle the motives of Jinnah.

It may be emphasised here that a greater phase of the nationalist struggle in India witnessed religious revivalism that often bordered on fanaticism. Right from the time of Mutiny, the appeal to nationalism seldom came without reference to the religious factor. This was one of the reasons

why the Hindu-Muslim unity could not be realized. Prominence accorded to the religious factor in the nationalist movement drew a permanent wedge between the two communities in the society. Communalism became a stark reality so much so, that several Muslims began to doubt the secular credentials of even great leaders like Gandhi and Tilak, and several Hindus were equally distrustful of Muslim leadership. One can stress here the admonitions of Mohammed Ali Jinnah to Gandhi on the issue of mixing religion with politics at a time when Jinnah, was associated with the Congress. Ironically, it was Jinnah who finally played the communal card to the hilt and formed Pakistan.

One of the principal fears of the Muslims was how they could live in an independent India dominated by the majority Hindus. Coincidentally, the Muslim leadership seldom paid any attention to the question as to what fate would befall those Muslims who could not migrate to Pakistan. Unfortunately, it happened only that way. The rich and urban Muslims managed to gain access to the new country after the Partition and a big majority of Muslims, mostly the poor and working classes, became victims of the bloodbath that followed the haphazard transfer of people.

India, however, remains a home to more number of Muslims than the entire population of Pakistan. It is also peaceful home, notwithstanding minor incidents, thanks to prevalence of a vibrant democracy that guarantees the fundamental rights to all citizens of the country, irrespective of their religion, caste, creed or culture.

The time demands from us the necessity and will to overlook the errors of leadership in the history of the nation and live recalling positive attempts of people like Maulana Mehmood-ul-Hasan, Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi, Maulana Syed Hussain Ahmed Madani, Maulana MohammedAli Jauhar, MaulanaAbul KalamAzad and others for the unity, integrity and bright future of our motherland.

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# Deoband Ulema's *Movement for the* Freedom of India



Farhat Tabassum

